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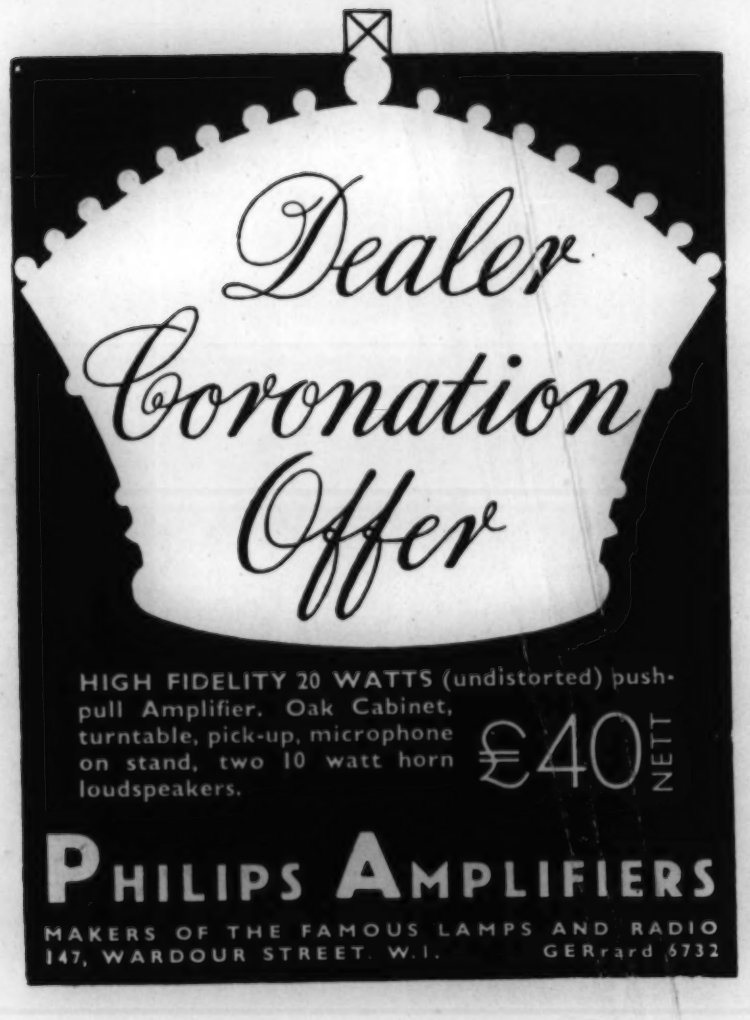
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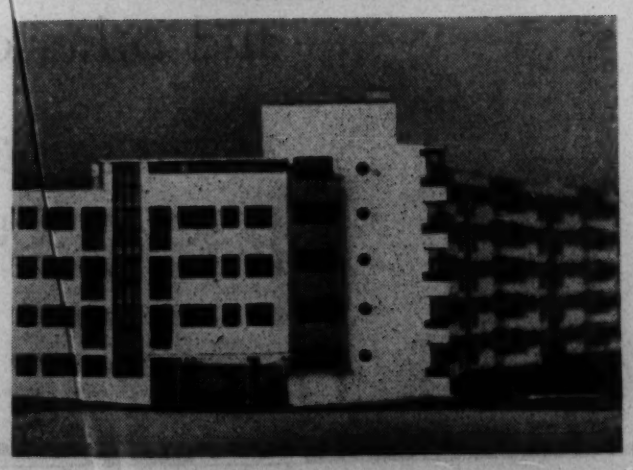

world FILM news

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS
(INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY)

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HOMAGE TO PAUL MUNI

A PAUL MUNI film is not a starring vehicle. We do not see Paul Muni in *The Story of Louis Pasteur;* we see the famous French chemist. He hides in the rôle; we cannot find him. In an Arliss film we can see nothing but Arliss; in a Laughton film nothing but Laughton; but in a Paul Muni film, Paul Muni is not to be found. He is gone, and another has taken his place: Scarface or Dr. Socrates or Louis Pasteur.

He is much too subtle to become a star. In fact he refuses to be an actor and insists on being a character. Others make up their outside for a part, and play it in their own style. Muni makes up his style: his personality: his individuality disappears. All good actors learn to get out of the limelight in favour of others. Paul Muni goes further. He stands aside in favour of the character he is playing.

It is a matter of considered policy with him; indeed it is his fundamental conception of his art. He sees his career not in terms of himself, but in terms of the characters he plays. Refusing to be typed, he is trying himself out in a variety of rôles. He feels within him powers not yet fully assessed. This is what marks him as different from others. Edward Robinson, for instance, is not unlike him in appearance and in his general technique of understatement. But Robinson is an older man: set, established. Paul Muni is not set, and if he can help it he never will be. We do not know just what he will be doing next: what character he will become.

He has artistic integrity and unselfishness (which is why Warner's *Louis Pasteur* had these qualities). Behind his work we can sense a "faithful, wondering mind." He has learned the lesson that if an actor's mind is faithful to his rôle, he need hardly act at all; things happen inside him, and the audience knows by intuition.

The rapport betweeen actor and audience is much more intimate in the cinema than in the theatre. The actor on the stage, no more than life size, has to throw his personality out to his audience; the cinema brings the audience close to the character, close enough to eavesdrop upon his muttered words, to spy upon the privacy of his mind. The actor can thus remain reserved: stay within himself; a man's inner self, his unexpressed feelings, his loneliness, may be the subject of drama on the screen as never on the stage. Paul Muni apprehends this. There is an "innermostness" in his work which makes him capable of tragedy. Perhaps he could not do Schubert (perhaps he could), but it is more than likely that he could do Beethoven.

He is young, serious, studious, and unique in grasping so early the principles of his art. Other men of his calibre learn too late that an actor should not exploit his individuality, but destroy it. From time to time Lionel Barrymore makes terrific efforts to be somebody else—but it is too late. He has been Lionel Barrymore too long. George Arliss has apparently never felt any desire to be anybody else, not even the Duke of Wellington. But Paul Muni has taken time by the forelock, and put Paul Muni out of the way for a start.

We have seen *The Story of Louis Pasteur* without Paul Muni. We shall soon see *The Good Earth* without Paul Muni. We look forward to not-seeing him in even greater films.

RUSSELL FERGUSON.

PAUL MUNI: Born 1897 near Vienna. Real name Muni Wiesenfreund.

Went to America in 1902 with his parents, theatrical people. Made stage debut at 11, as an old man. Appeared in Vaudeville. As a result of work in Theatre Guild was given the leading role in *We Americans* on Broadway.

His films include: *The Valiant*, *Seven Faces* (in which he portrayed eight characters), *Scarface*, *I am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*, *The World Changes*, *Hi! Nellie*, *Black Fury*, *Border Town*, *Dr. Socrates*, *The Story of Louis Pasteur*, *The Enemy of Man*, *The Good Earth*. Now making *Emil Zola*.

Hollywood sold us sex, crime, horror, history— now comes HEROISM

HOORAY YOU'RE DEAD

by RUSSELL FERGUSON

THE Charge of the Light Brigade broke records on its first run in the Carlton. This is not surprising. It is very big medicine: heap good, heap bad, according to your point of view. It is Hollywood's latest and most stunningly successful essay in the genre: Brown-on-Resolution—sons of guns—backs to the wall—up-guards-and-at-'em—and now theirs not to reason why, theirs but to do or die. The culmination, the actual charge, is as wonderful a piece of work as ever came out of Hollywood. Every cinematic device that could enhance a perfect cinematic subject has been used with brilliance; massed horsemen, acres of them, at full gallop: close-ups, partial shots, fades and mixes, flashing and thundering hooves; smoke, explosions, all built up to a magnificent climax; and this assault on the eye is supplemented by a sound-track that weds Tschaikovsky's 1812 overture to "God-the-All-Terrible," with Rule Britannia in attendance and the Marseillaise never very far away—an assault on the ear which matches the pictures to perfection, the whole punctuated with salvoes of artillery and underlined with a continuous deafening roar. The visual climax is irresistibly inspiring: a standard bearer is shot at about fifty miles an hour, dies at fifty-five miles an hour, and the falling flag is snatched from his dying hand and raised on high, still flying, by a trooper overtaking at sixty miles an hour.

Result—terrific heroism, particularly in the theatre. You feel brave, your eyes fill, your heart fills, you cannot keep your seat. *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.* A wave of mass-masochism floods the audience. You triumph over death: in imagination you fall forward with the dying man, your soul suspired floats heavenward above the smoke. Hooray, you're dead.

Unless—unless. Unless you hold tight, and think hard, and think straight. If you do, you will be filled with fear. You will realise as the sweat dries on your brow that you are face to face with one of the most terrifying things in the modern world—the cinema in the hands of an expert.

Let us think of the flag. It is not only the Union Jack: it is also the Roman eagle.

The Romans kept huge armies on the road, sun-scorched, plague- and vermin-ridden, steel shod, carrying all their gear, willing to march for days and fight like tigers in defence not of their own wretchedness but of Rome's opulence. How was it done?

It was done by means of *esprit de corps.* Reasoning was not the Roman soldier's forte, for he was illiterate, superstitious and credulous. Even so, brute-reason told him he was a fool to stand the racket, and rebellions and desertions were a constant feature of Roman history. But gradually in the course of generations the military caste in alliance with the priestcraft built a system of *esprit de corps* into the Roman armies. It was no use telling the men the truth, even if they could have understood it, for the system was not sufficiently just and humane to withstand the cold light of reason. So the generals told the men they were heroes, convinced them they were heroes, and the men became heroes. Rather than let down his unit, a Roman legionary would drag his tortured flesh for miles; rather than lose his standard he would throw away his life. He was taught daily until he accepted the principles without question that his century was the best in the cohort, his cohort the best in the legion, his legion the best in the army, his army the best in the Empire and his Empire the best in the world.

What were the instruments of propaganda? The men couldn't read, there was no press, anyhow. No radio, unless we say Rumor, a word which permeates Roman history. The instruments were Rhetoric and Religion. No Roman general was any use unless he was a skilled rhetorician. All movements were prefaced by pep-talks, some of which survive as models of oratory. The armies were attended by priests, who produced miracles (such as rainstorms and lightning or lack of either), inspected dead beasts, watched the skies, and fed the men with mumbo-jumbo to convince them they would win on the morrow. In such psychological circumstances the men did prodigies of valour and endurance as part of their daily task. The scheme worked for centuries.

The Roman eagle has become the Union Jack, the Hammer and Sickle, the Tricolor, the Stars and Stripes, the Swastika. Rome has left upon the world a pattern that time has not effaced. The terrible thing is, it is now sevenfold. There are now seven Roman armies in the world.

The instruments of military propaganda are much the same to-day as in Ancient Rome: *esprit de corps* nourished by rhetoric. The Dublin Fusiliers are the best regiment in the world. So are the Northumberland Fusiliers. The British Army is second to none. The German army is second to none. The American Army is second to none. Everybody is taller than everybody else.

In the midst of this feast of unreason, Hollywood discovers the art of Film Rhetoric. Pudovkin and Eisenstein invented it ten years ago, but Hollywood has just discovered it. And it is wonderful selling stuff. People love to be worked up into a state of heroism. If Hollywood decides to sell heroism at this particular juncture in international affairs, it will be just one more indication that a certain kind of people will do anything for money. Hollywood sold us sex, sold us crime, sold us horror, sold us history. Heaven forbid they sell us heroism, for it is a terribly dangerous thing, and if it is offered we shall buy it and buy it and buy it, like strong drink. The Germans and the Italians seem to be quite drunk, but we must try to keep sober.

It will need a strong head. For when you see *The Charge of the Light Brigade* you feel brave. And when you feel brave, if you think as I do, you feel afraid.

EDITORIAL

The Glittering Eye of Television

RECENT NEWS OF TELEVISION reveals swift and interesting developments. The picture improves and is well past experiment and novelty. The frame is small but it is in the nature of all media to have limits. They need not prevent a high standard of accomplishment if the limitations are understood and exploited.

This little screen provides a degree of intimacy which makes television only a remote relation to the cinema. The teacher of gardening with his blackboard illustrates, for example, a directness of appeal which is altogether extraordinary. He is a new phenomenon. He works in a new plane of communication: closer than the commentator of the films, closer even than the commentator of the lecture room. The focus of the screen and the darkness of television bring him, we are even willing to believe, closer than a neighbour. We can at least answer our neighbour back, but here the speaker can fix us with the glittering eye of the ancient mariner and control us completely. The possibilities in this direction are enormous. Those disembodied and never quite satisfactory voices of the Talks Department must soon become real, and lecturing, against every expectation in the world, will have a new lease of life.

The production staff at Alexandra Palace are to be congratulated on a remarkable discovery, and not even the second-rate masks and second-rate dancing of their mask dances nor the clumsy handling of their variety songs can conceal their achievement. We hear of a coaxial cable which will circle the West End of London and make the theatre stage available for television. The economic limitations of television must be consulted and there seems no doubt that the future of television entertainment is in the wings of the West End theatres. But, for the moment, our money is on the teacher of gardening. The West End theatres we know to our cost, but this gardening man we have never quite met before.

A Great Record

MR. GORER'S COMPLAINT about the London Film Society's choice of programmes is answered on another page. The true answer, of course, is in the great and beneficial influence which the Society has exercised during its twelve years of life. It has struck ahead of the taste of the day, and the majority of the films which have later found notice in film history have first appeared on its screen. It has done as much for the producers as for the critics and has given new directors a first opportunity of showing their qualities.

Our only criticism is that the personnel of the Film Society is becoming somewhat superannuated. The old stagers hang on and it is just possible that they have not all moved as fast as the art of cinema itself. One feels sometimes that they are still searching, with a Teutonic candle, for the old familiar sensations of *Destiny* and *The Golem*. During the past two or three years there have been one or two cases of good films discarded and bad ones chosen—only, we believe, because the spirit of enquiry has not been as vivid as it might have been.

Without underestimating the difficulties of the Society or belittling the great work of the veterans, we suggest that more and more young men should be promoted to the Council of the Film Society. The art of sound film is a whole generation younger than the departed art of the silent cinema. Minds trained in the old medium may find it difficult to be competent judges of the new.

The Growing Control of the City

RECENT EVENTS HAVE considerably changed the problem of the future control and policy of the Gaumont-British Picture Corporation Ltd., as described by the Film Council in the January issue of *W.F.N.* and "Money Behind the Screen." The decision of the board, acting on the advice of the Ostrer interests, to pay the current preference dividend was strongly contested both by Mr. Maxwell and by the three representatives of the Fox interests on the grounds that this payment was not justified by economic facts. The dissenting board members were reported to be taking legal advice on the situation.

A few days later the board met in order to decide whether or not to continue the production activities of the Corporation. Again there was the same alignment of conflicting opinions, Mr. Maxwell and the Fox representatives advocating, and the other board members opposing, the continuation of production. After an adjourned meeting (February 24, 1937) it was reported that an agreement had been reached between Mr. Ostrer acting for the Gaumont board and Mr. Woolf, acting for General Film Distributors Ltd. Production was to cease at the Shepherd's Bush Gaumont studios (except in the case of Gaumont News), G.F.D. at Pinewood and Gainsborough at Islington were each to produce four films per year which the former company was to distribute on behalf of the Gaumont organisation.

The entry of a fourth main partner, the Rank-Portal group, into the already sufficiently complex situation came as a surprise, although the existence of an apparently only slight link was already pointed out by the Film Council. But this is not all. Again, a few days later, it was reported that there might be a hitch in this latter agreement, since the consent of the Law Debenture Corporation Ltd. was required for any change in the company's affairs possibly affecting the value of the debentures for which they are the trustees.

This statement illustrates the general conclusion drawn by the Film Council that the increasing weight of debenture and other loan capital is tending to give a growing measure of control over the industry to a few powerful credit institutions. For the Law Debenture Corporation Ltd. are the trustees not only for the Gaumont-British Picture Corporation Debentures, but also for those of the Associated British Picture Corporation and other companies.

After an interval of several weeks, the Law Debenture Corporation Ltd. wrote to the Gaumont board that they had been informed by Council that "nothing has arisen to justify the intervention" by them as trustees for the Gaumont Debenture stock. The agreement which "scraps" the creative ability of most of the technicians and other employees at Shepherd's Bush, is thus allowed to go forward.

At the same time the appointment of yet another new member to the Gaumont board was announced. He is A. E. Messer, a director of the Equity and Law Life Assurance Society and of the British Law Insurance Co. Ltd.

The Fantastic Toe

IT APPEARS THAT Herr Julius Streicher, a celebrated Jew-baiter, has turned his attention to the critics. We read in the papers that while rehearsals for a Viennese revue were proceeding recently at Nuremberg, this Nazi chieftain strode into the theatre followed by a group of critics, both old and young. The stage was cleared and the critics were forced by Herr Streicher to go on to the boards and attempt to perform some of the dances. "Naturally," says the correspondent, "the ungraceful antics of the untrained critics created much laughter."

We like this story, but are not altogether astonished by it. In our experience, the dance of criticism is practised in most countries. The motivating circumstances vary and there are subtler instruments of persuasion than the Nazi blackjack, but the little feet are seen only too often stepping to the tune of their masters. If anything surprises us it is the fact that the Nuremberg critics were clumsy. We British nationals pride ourselves on a far higher degree of skill.

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Paul Muni and Luise Rainer in *The Good Earth*

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The Disney Menace to Comedy

by

Jack Hulbert

In an interview with Danvers Williams he contributes an important analysis of present revolutionary trends of Comedy.

THE life of the film-comedian is growing gradually more arduous. It is much more difficult to make a comedy nowadays than it was five years ago. The reason for our distress is Walt Disney.

Disney has brought slapstick to such a state of perfection that no flesh and blood comedian can compete with him in this field.

A few years ago, if a comedian fell flat on his back, or was seen to run the wrong way down a moving staircase, the average audience went into fits of laughter. Disney has put an end to all that. Cinemagoers have seen Mickey Mouse fall a thousand feet from a precipice and get up unhurt. They have seen Donald Duck dissolve into thin air, and they have watched a whole orchestra carried up into the clouds by a cyclone. The gags of flesh-and-blood comedians fall pretty flat after that.

Of course, none of the great comedians ever relied entirely upon slapstick. It is well known that although pure slapstick goes down well in 'shorts', it becomes tedious in a feature-length film. I believe that even Disney's inspired nonsense, though always interesting from a technical point of view, would begin to drag a little if his pictures were an hour long instead of eight minutes.

All the really first-class film comedians purvey something more important than slapstick. Chaplin's forte is mime. The Marx Brothers are satirists. Eddie Cantor and Harold Lloyd both have a human as well as a comedy appeal.

But, in the past, we comedians all relied to some extent on knock-about humour. Now, unless we cut it from pictures altogether and find something else to replace it, we are doomed. I do not think this is too strong a word.

Of course, one could always try and compete with Disney by using advanced trick photography; but my own personal feelings is that however many good trick men I employed, I could never produce slapstick of the same inspired quality. And even if I could, there is another disadvantage. By concentrating on this type of humour I should become merely an automaton working in a comedy machine, and should lose all the human appeal which is almost my most important attribute.

Therefore, I decided months ago to abandon knock-about humour and make a more sophisticated, 'Thin Man' type of comedy. But I have had to make the change very gradually, for I realised that the public, unconscious of my predicament, would feel vaguely disappointed if my pictures did not contain a few knock-about gags, reminiscent of *Jack's the Boy* and other early successes.

My first picture embodying the new ideas was *Jack of All Trades*. When I purchased the story I fully intended making a straight sophisticated comedy; but my executives prevailed upon me to give the picture a knock-about ending.

Undiluted Keystone

In the early sequences I was just a normal, rather fatuous young man drawn into a web of comic circumstances. The fire-raising scenes at the end of the picture were undiluted Keystone stuff.

I was gratified to notice that, although some critics preferred the slapstick, the majority of them favoured the more reasonable humour at the beginning. In the picture which I have just completed, *Take My Tip*, there is no slapstick at all.

What effect Disney will ultimately have on such comedians as Laurel and Hardy, Wheeler and Woolsey and Eddie Cantor I cannot surmise. I did notice, however, that in his last film, *The Milky Way*, Harold Lloyd adopted much the same policy as I.

Lloyd's tactics in the old silent success, *Safety Last*, in which he climbed a sky-scraper, wouldn't cause a modern audience very much amusement. Therefore, in *The Milky Way*, Lloyd concentrated on a type of humour which Disney's art does not cover. In the old days he was, like Mickey Mouse, a fantastic being who could hang a thousand feet above a busy thoroughfare on nothing more substantial than a braces button.

In *The Milky Way* Lloyd was a tawny, suburban youth (of a type we must all have met at one time or another) who became entangled in a mesh of comedy. The story was strong and reasonable, and the humour arose partly from Lloyd's utter normality and partly from the satirical jibes which filled the film.

Upon the Marx Brothers Disney can have little or no effect: they purvey a brand of humour entirely different from anything else on stage or screen. Their satire is too advanced and too closely linked with the subconscious mind ever to appeal to the ordinary cinemagoer, but to the connoisseur of comedy they are what Yehudi Mehuhin must be to the professional musician.

I understand that efforts are being made to popularise the mad Marx's, but that seems to me to be as difficult a proposition as trying to popularise Einstein. As some are born poets, so the Marx Brothers were born clowns. Their humour is inimitable. Rob them of their extreme sophistication and their nonsense would become meaningless.

The famous British team of Walls and Lynn is similarly unaffected by Disney, but for a very different reason. Walls and Lynn

Jack Hulbert (contd.)

are the best exponents we have of a type of purely British burlesque. Their technique is theatrical and the characters they have created are all exaggerated specimens of English types: the rotter, the B.F., the henpecked husband. Their comedy is well loved and understood in this country and over here nothing could possibly shake their popularity.

Many well-informed critics hold the view that the person hardest hit by Disney is Charlie Chaplin. I do not altogether agree. Although Chaplin has always relied a great deal on knock-about humour, his chief appeal for me has always been his miming. What other actor in the world could have put so much humour and pathos into that scene in *Modern Times* where he developed St. Vitus Dance? Chaplin is the greatest individual artist the screen has ever known. I have never once seen him try to be funny and fail. He can express, by moving a tea-cup, what it would take the average comedian a tableful of crockery to express.

Too great a Classic

The trouble with Chaplin is that he is too great a classic. His problem is how to alter his technique without impairing the little figure which he has made famous.

I would, personally, like to see the same Chaplin, perhaps a shade less exaggerated and more in keeping with the modern technique, in an ordinary sound film, in which he alone remained silent. Harpo has managed to do this quite successfully. Why not Chaplin?

I trust you are beginning to see what a worrying thing it is being a screen comedian. Over and above one's continual fight to move with the times and not become outmoded, there are a thousand other things to be considered.

"Speed" in humour

There is, for example, the immense question of public taste. What do audiences want? What do they laugh at?

English people prefer a slower type of humour than that which is popular in America. This is quite natural, for life in America is much faster than here. If you study German comedy you will find that their humour is even slower. Now, while my following is extensively English, I also have quite a large public in America. So I have to be careful to turn out a type of humour which is not unintelligibly fast in England, nor laboriously slow in the United States.

Thus, an incident which the Marx Brothers would put over in one shot, and a German comedian would put over in five shots, and which I would normally put over in three shots, I do actually in two. Then I hope that it will satisfy the public of both countries. Every one of my scenes has to be thought out in this way.

When I have taken a hundred or so scenes, all of which are more or less humorous, they are shown to a select gathering. Some of the shots, which seemed funniest in the making, fail to raise a laugh and have to be cut.

Indeed, the whole process of making a comedy is as cold and as calculated as a geometrical theorem. There is no such thing as impromptu humour on the screen. The more seriously one works, the better the results.

Came "The Dawn"*

by NORRIS DAVIDSON

London, and other film societies are now seeing *The Dawn*, the first entirely Irish film ever made. The story of its making reverses movie history for instead of building an industry and then turning out films the producers made the film and are now sitting back and seeing about the possibilities of yet another native industry. The native product is always interesting, and this one particularly so, for the necessity of creating the story resulted in the film, another reversal of the process of deciding to make a film for X and Y in the leads and then creating a sympathetic story for them.

Tom Cooper, author, director and one of the chief actors in the story, had no further experience of movies than a study of what was shown in the cinema which he himself owns. Indeed, as one critic remarked, the director shows for his chosen medium not respect but, rather, impatience. And it is this impatience which is the clue to the life and sincerity of *The Dawn;* the story *has* to be made. Sincerity is a term which has been used to justify an enormous footage of incompetence, but not so in *The Dawn*.

The story is superb. Story and dialogue form a part of Ireland of 1920 and a part of the life of its actors. It is only the shadowy prologue, set in the last century, which fails to be convincing and fails because it was not immediately alive to the producers of the film.

I saw *The Dawn* for the third time when it was being run for an audience of some of England's younger directors and critics. Its technical faults are obvious, too obvious for comment, eloquent of the struggle for a beginning which Hibernia Films has made—a struggle which more experienced men would not have attempted, and *The Dawn* would prove them wrong.

By now the story of its production is fairly well known; short lengths of film developed in a chemist's shop, experiments with more or less home-made sound equipment, and then the start. The tiny studio is lit by converted trawler's lights, the home-made microphone boom squeaked when moved and so speakers could not be followed about the studio, the tripod of the Studio Debrie was made in the Director's garage, there was not one professional actor in the whole bunch—and with that *The Dawn* began. It began either with blind arrogance or in the courageous spirit of Flaherty returning to the Far North to remake *Nanook* after the destruction of most of the first negative. This film *is* Ireland, and the incredible thing is that men who had actually lived a part of the story should not have been too close to it to distinguish between what was important to them and what is important to an audience.

The film is non-propagandist, it has no star to create, often its apparent understatement reveals something with dazzling simplicity. In one sequence an I.R.A. column resting in the hills is brought news of the arrival of the Black and Tans (English mercenaries) at the local barracks. The messenger describes their odd uniforms, their appearance, "——and they don't like us", he concludes, "——They don't like us"——immediately one knows that the Kerry voice has spoken the only possible line, a line which all the MacArthurs and Biro's in the world could not have thought up in a million years. No menacing close-ups, no involuntary tightening of fingers on triggers, it is just a mid-shot of the rather blown messenger sitting on the grass and giving his news. "——and they don't like us."

Again, compare the street-singer who postures in *The Informer* and *The Plough and the Stars* with the sweet voice which sings unconcernedly of

"——cold Sergeant Death——"

who stalked the country in those days.

Throughout the picture the Director does incredible things. One of the two heroes is killed, and killed in Long Shot, stumbling wounded on the brow of a hill. The story demands that and gets it. A star actor in the part would have demanded a dying scene, and the story would have lost. One recalls, too, the very last hundred feet of the enormously moving climax in which the Director dares to cut in an "insert" of a letter, flouting all studio conventions, substituting a letter for what might have been a ticklish speech and getting away with it adroitly.

If the occasionally slow tempo and lack of certainty in the direction is the result of inexperience, then *The Dawn* as a whole is a fine beginning, but if it indicates that the Director was deliberately feeling his way in a first production then we are going to hear a great deal more of Hibernia Films. Their's can be the creation of an Irish idiom in the cinema.

**THE DAWN*. Hibernia Films, Killarney, Ireland. Directed by Thomas Cooper.

"Comrades, Arise"

WAR CINEMAS IN SPAIN

by Dr. Manfred Georg

SPANISH CINEMAS ARE still well patronised, in spite of the civil war. One has to be punctual for the last performance at 10 o'clock; certainly, as, in most towns, it is impossible otherwise to find the cinema entrance in the pitch darkness, unless one brings a torch. It is not till one o'clock at the earliest that the searchlights from the air-raids show up the streets a little. In fact there is no stopping the Spaniards from going to "the pictures." Even in Madrid, the theatres which have not been destroyed by bombardment, go on with their programmes, just as usual. If rebel 'planes fly over, the audience gets to its feet with one accord and sings hymns of defiance, after which it sits down again, quite calmly, while the defence batteries outside rattle out a grim accompaniment to the booming of the cannon.

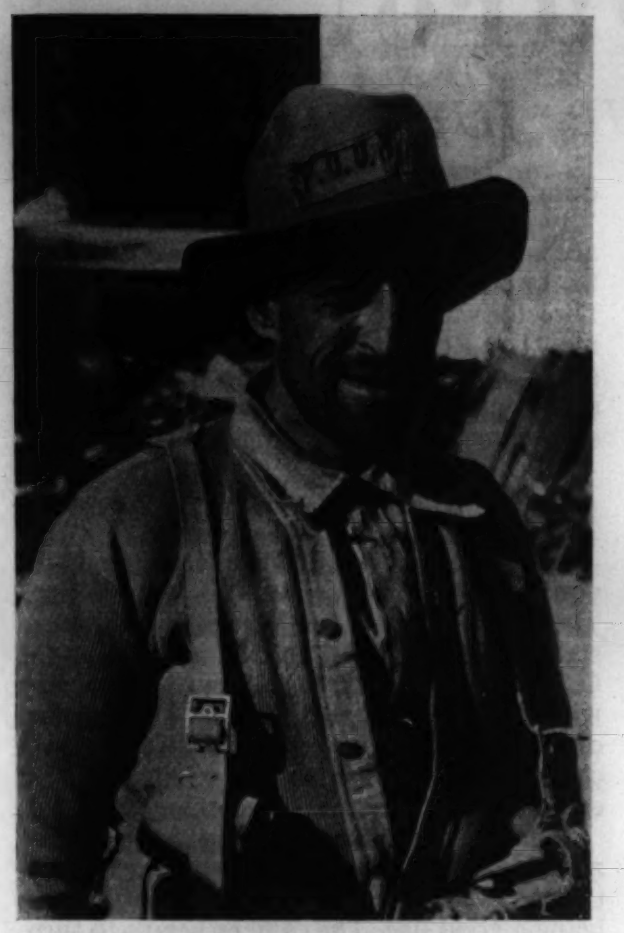
Cinema shows have become extraordinarily cheap. Modern films play little part in the programmes in Alicante, Valencia, and Madrid—except for the Russian ones with their collective revolutionary themes, particularly *Chapayev* and *We from Kronstadt*. But films with Chaplin and Shirley Temple and the older productions are the favourites. In Barcelona it is different. There they get the very newest American pictures and for one peseta it is possible to see three American long films.

The Civil War has produced, from both sides, news shorts which are full of significant technical flaws. On the other hand they are so real and have been obtained at such risk to the photographers that their daring leaves one stunned. But the most impressive experience is that of sitting among the people while they watch the glorification of their struggle in the Civil War shown on the screen. The front seats are packed with soldiers—still in their army outfit. War films showing battles in Madrid and around Aragon are received by the public with much enthusiasm. Here and there, one sees groups of weeping women, hears a scream, recognises the village, or regiment or scene of battle one knew so well a few weeks ago. The two chief newsreels showing in Spain are the rebel *Los Aguilochos de la Fai* and *La dernière Minute*. Besides these there are Fox and Paramount newsreels.

The management of film affairs shows improvement at the present time only in Catalonia which has been up to now the part of Spain least affected by the war. In Barcelona, M. José Carner-Ribalta, the commissioner for plays and films, is always ready to supply an answer to any questions that may be raised. The old firms go on as before, under capitalist management and continue to produce films. Provisional experiments are being carried out, e.g. a musical film, *Bohemios;* an Opera film, *Molinos de Viento;* and a thriller, *Miedo* (Fear). Besides these, two "guidance" films, dealing with social problems, are being prepared. They were ordered by the Syndicate for Public Entertainment.

Of course, film companies are under government control. Each film represents a company enterprise, which involves daily sums amounting to between 125 and 250 pesetas a week.

War Cinemas in Spain (contd.)



Militiaman on the Aragon Front

The management's chief aim is to avoid unemployment and to keep everyone connected with films in a post, so far as that is possible till conditions are normal again. Accordingly, finance is the main concern, and, while the prices of seats in the cinemas have been reduced, programmes have been made much longer, and variety—and orchestra—performances have been introduced.

But, for a modern film industry, there is one great drawback—the lack (temporarily, of course) of the necessary technicians.

Foreign films are imported by private concerns,which are, however, like all Spanish companies, controlled by trades unions.

Spaniards are particularly fond of films. There are 2,500 cinemas in the country, and eight hundred of these in Catalonia. Eighty per cent. of the Spanish population attends the cinema.

In 1936 alone, America made 200,000,000 pesetas from the films it sent to Spain. Problem pictures are not much patronised. There has to be a great deal of action. James Cagney is a greater favourite than Greta Garbo, and Chaplin is far ahead of Marlene Dietrich. Gangster and Russian films score most points; sentimental films, such as *Masquerade*, and musical films have varied results.

Films for schools and factories are the most important projects for the near future. They will supplement the usual instruction given. Pictures about safety-first and politics, and special programmes for the peasants are under way, and also educational films that are in accordance with the campaign against old-fashioned methods.

In general, the new Spanish films have practically the same themes to work with as the Russian, and they ought to be made along the same lines: entertainment films based on history, and educational films which aim at extending the field of culture. Ordinary film production will go on for some time, for the sake of providing employment (and perhaps to replace foreign pictures which go astray), until the restoration of peace makes possible a normal arrangement for the Government's new production of films on a social basis.

Nationalism v. Internationalism

"MESSAGE FROM GENEVA"
"LINE TO THE TSCHIERVA HUT"
"MEN OF THE ALPS"

(G.P.O. Film Unit. Production: John Grierson, Direction: Alberto Cavalcanti. Camera: John Taylor).

These three shorts appear to be a by-product of the main Cavalcanti-Priestley film *We Live in Two Worlds*, for which they are certainly a good augury.

It is very pleasant to see documentaries in which the visuals have battled their way back to pride of place despite the urgent claims of the sound track. All three films are good to look at, both from the point of view of photography and cutting.

Message from Geneva is a fast moving and well-analysed presentation of the League of Nations communications tie-ups.

Men of the Alps draws a vivid picture of the life of Switzerland and *Line to the Tschierva Hut* is a straightforward documentary (in the best sense of the word) of the building of a telephone line up to an Alpine fastness.

There is an underlying motif in each of these films—a presentation of the present ideological conflict between nationalism and internationalism. *We live in Two Worlds* will presumably put this across in full. Meantime we can be thankful for three good-looking and interesting shorts which hint at one of the most pressing problems of modern civilisation.

C. M.

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Donat and Dietrich in "Knight without Armour"

PROLOGUE

When Fond Young Mothers bring me their Wonderful Children (the image of Shirley Temple and/or Freddie Bartholomew, don't you think?) I am always certain of three things: (1) they are twelve years older than they look; (2) they lisp; and (3) they can sing "You and the Night and the Music Fill Me with Flaming Desire" (and *will* if you are not careful).

If I have been lucky enough to escape the song, I always give them a copy of my Brief History of Film Acting:

PART I. WAITING

Tests.

One's first film test is always made in the dead of night. Immediately after an extremely heavy stage performance I was informed that a high-speed car was waiting to take me out to the studios. Would I please hurry as everything was ready for me! I hurried. How I hurried! I arrived at the studio and found the entire staff in a frenzy. A make-up was slapped on me. I was given a script. I was taken on to the studio floor. There I waited: for three hours. At 3.45 a.m. I was given some sandwiches and a whisky and soda. At 4 a.m. I was given three more whiskies and sodas. At 4.30, not sure whether I was about to make a film test or was captaining the English side against Australia, the test was taken.

Two days later I was shown the test. The Director was awfully apologetic—for two reasons: I was not "photogénique," and my eyes suffered from a defect known technically as "halation." After seeing the test run through I came to the conclusion that "halation" was a technical expression describing the effects of four double whiskies and sodas administered just before dawn.

PART II. WAITING

More Tests.

Again I am rushed on to the studio floor. I am wearing full evening dress, according to instructions. The "set" prepared for me is a modern English drawing-room—style, Elstree. The Director, who is very kind, pithily describes the scene we are about to shoot—"You come down the stairs and there is a girl waiting by the table. (We haven't got a girl as a matter of fact, but don't let that worry you). She is standing just about there; you are carrying a bouquet. (We haven't got a bouquet—use this book.) By the way, you oughtn't to be in evening-dress, but that doesn't really matter. O.K.? Turn over." I wasn't sure if this order applied to me but as there was no protest when I didn't turn over (I couldn't have anyway—you've no idea how stiff that shirt was or how far it reached) I presumed it didn't. I made my entrance down the steps with my bouquet, trying to look as if I didn't suffer from halation and as if I were the most photogénique subject in Christendom, only to hear the Director shout out: "By the way, can you talk with a Canadian accent? I forgot to tell you you're a Canadian backwoodsman." Two days elapsed. The Director was *very* sorry but Elstree considered me "Too Romantic." I decided to give up the screen and live a pure life in pursuit of Art. (Note, at this time Hollywood were literally screaming out for romantic actors.)

PART III. WAITING

Three Years Later. Another Test.

"Please hurry, Mr. Donat, we're ready for you. You've kept us waiting, you know." The make-up man is waiting; the technical staff is waiting; the Director is waiting; the Great British Public is waiting. My starving wife and baby are also waiting. I am rushed on to the floor. I see: (1) a rostrum with a chair upon it; (2) a couple of lights; (3) a camera; (4) a Woman Director.

Item number four is fuming. She thinks I am "Ham"; she doesn't want me in the picture anyway. She has no intention of the test being a good one. The camera begins to turn. The lights flicker but the test goes on. I sit there mumbling my words. The lady Director interrupts me. I fluff, I stammer, I splutter. She splutters. The lights splutter. The lady Director screams "cut," but before they have time to stop the film I sit back in my chair and laugh. And laugh. And laugh. I make up my mind to become a waiter. Two days later the lady Director sees the test. It is atrocious; but during the last moment of the test a Hungarian genius happens to look into the theatre and see a bewildered young actor expressing his opinion of the film industry in terms of laughter. The lights go up. "Well," says the lady Director triumphantly, "what do you think of him?" "Marvellous!" says Alexander Korda, "that burst of laughter is the most spontaneous thing I have ever seen on the screen." I am given a contract.

EPILOGUE

September 1934.

I have overslept. The high-speed car is waiting at the door. It's a Rolls. I am raced to the studio. The make-up artist is waiting. The Productions Manager is waiting. The Leading Lady is waiting. At last I get on the floor. They have been waiting for three hours. But now there is a difference. I am a star (see *Film Weekly*). So we all wait together. René Clair is the most amusing man you could possibly wish to have to wait with. We break for lunch. At 3.30 we shoot our first scene. It is lousy. At 4.30 we re-take it. At 6.30 the Productions Manager comes on the set. He introduces me to a titled relative who says she thinks I am wonderful. At 6.35 the Productions Manager asks me if I will work all night.

Finale.

We work all night.

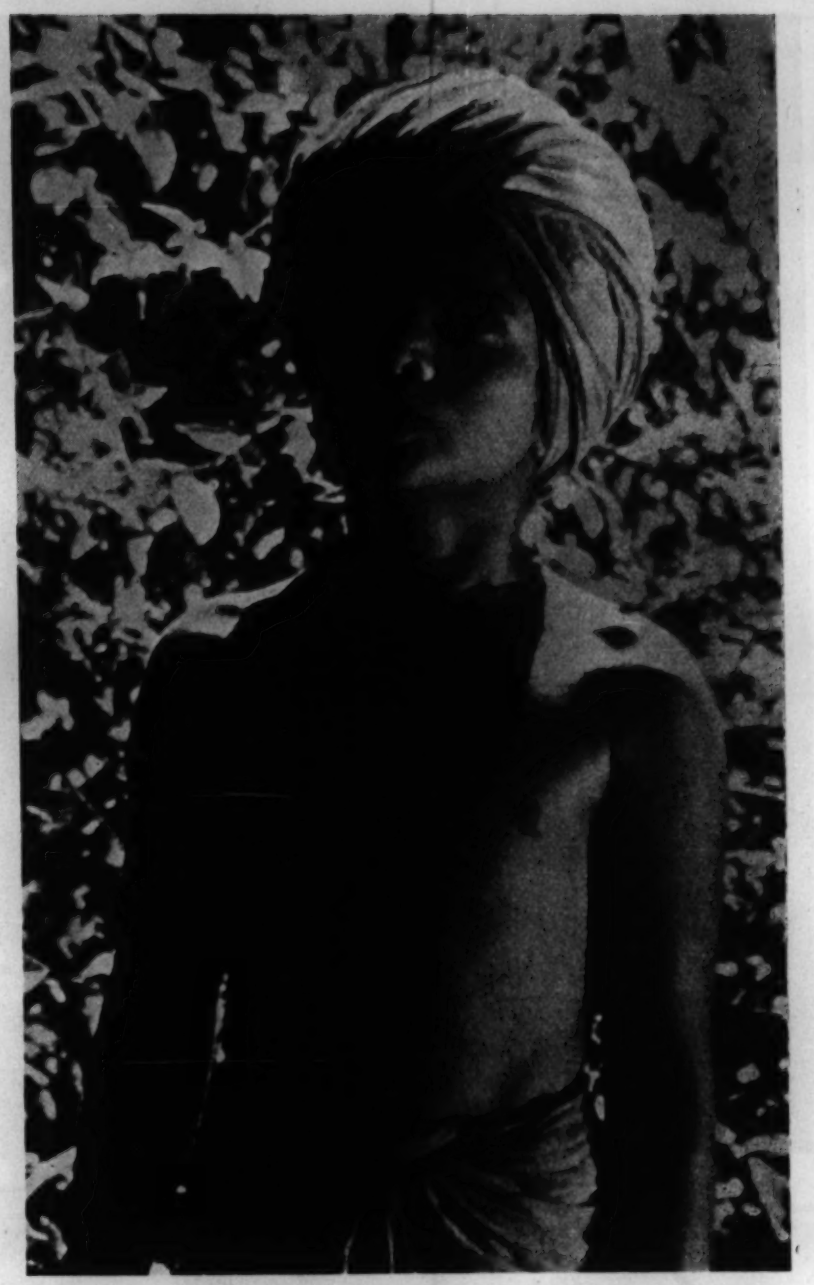
(*By courtesy of Robert Donat and The Cherwell*)

Sabu

by

David

Flaherty



"Sabu in his youth and innocence gives a dignity to the Indian people one has never seen before on the screen" said John Grierson in last month's issue of W.F.N.

SABU is the miracle we had hoped to find in India. Born in the jungles of Mysore, he was found, rather ragged and not outstandingly clean, playing about the elephant stables of the Maharaja. He is an orphan; his father, a mahout, died in the service of the Maharaja. Sabu lived with his elder brother, who drove a taxi in the town of Mysore. Sabu drew from the Mysore Government his father's pension at the rate of two rupees (three shillings) a month. The miracle was that Sabu was at once a mahout, photogenic and a natural actor. He had no fear. With us he was in his element, since most of *Elephant Boy* was shot in the jungle where he was born, among elephants and elephant folk that he knew. But London was another matter.

When last June Sabu arrived with his brother and his Brahmin teacher, he could speak almost no English beyond the lines which had been laboriously taught him. He had always been, however, remarkably quick in understanding what was said to him.

This brief account of his impressions here will lack the note of naïveté one would expect. This is because Sabu's is no ordinary character. His reactions to people and things, to what he has seen in London, reveal a depth and maturity quite unexpected.

Save for his flaming red turban, Sabu dresses like an English boy. Ragged as he was when we first saw him, he now is meticulously careful in his dress, always immaculately groomed. His turban is almost a part of his anatomy; he would never be seen without it. This has nothing to do with his religion, but he has had to wear his hair so long for the film that people might banteringly call him "girl." Winding on his turban (no one can do it but Sabu) is almost a rite, an operation deft, precise, deliberate, which consumes not seconds but minutes. No star of the cinema is more careful of his appearance than this young mahout with two suits to his name. The jungle has become completely cosmopolitan; certainly this is at least a minor miracle.

There were the inevitable newspaper interviews. The reporters got the impression of a fine little fellow, a bit shy, yet with a certain sturdiness and composure which they could not help remarking. They were aware of a certain reserve and dignity in the little boy's bearing, undoubtedly the mark of Islam, for Sabu is fully conscious that Mohammedans are the best people in the world. But his smile when it broke through this reserve they found all the more charming. However, they were able to get little out of him.

"Do you like London?"

A smile, rather shy. "Yes."

"Are you homesick for India?"

A broader, confident smile. "No."

We would then invent questions relating to Mysore, to his own life there, in the hope of bringing forth a picturesque reply.

"Do you miss Kala Nag?" A smile, not as wistful as we had hoped. (Kala Nag, of course, is Sabu's elephant in the film.)

"Does the traffic of London frighten you more than herd of wild elephants?" Sabu laughed outright at the naïveté of the question, indicating clearly that he was afraid neither of London's traffic nor of the wild elephants.

One soon learns that it is fruitless and unnecessary to "talk down" to Sabu. His is an enquiring mind, however, and his Brahmin teacher was driven nearly frantic with Sabu's endless, minute questions. He wanted the last details on ships, aeroplanes, wireless, trick photography, war, government, finance, religion.

The teacher is an intelligent young man with some education, and he soon found his way about London. Sabu was taken to the parks, where the band was playing; to the British Museum, where his eyes lit up on seeing the robes and weapons of Tipu, sultan of Mysore; to the Natural History Museum, where he puzzled not a little over the African female elephant with long tusks; to the Science Museum, where the exhibits of machinery fascinated him and provoked questions which the poor teacher racked his brains to answer; to the Regent's Park Zoo where he was given a ride on a cow elephant. The elephant tried to bolt, but Sabu was easily a match for her. He remarked, on dismounting, that the elephants here were very small. (His own Kala Nag, one of the largest elephants in India, stands nine feet eight inches from the withers.)

The art galleries he did not find so interesting. Not so interesting as Madame Tussaud's, where he recognised at least three figures he knew—Charlie Chaplin, Mahatma Gandhi, and King Edward VIII.

He has been sculptured by Lady Kennet, painted by Egerton Cooper, has broadcast over the B.B.C., and televised at Alexandra Palace.

Sabu's frequent attendance at cinemas during his leisure time has been quite the reverse of demoralizing. It is only a manifestation of his burning desire to improve himself, his speech, his manners. He loved *David Copperfield*, quite apart from the inevitable allusions to himself as an Indian Freddie Bartholomew. Of course he loved Charlie Chaplin in *Modern Times* and, naturally, Mickey Mouse.

Elephant Boy was completed at Denham. There were nearly two months of exterior night shooting, beginning early in September. The nights grew steadily colder, and there was some concern over Sabu, whose costume was a loin cloth and a turban. The English actors suffered from colds, but the boy from the warm jungles caught not the slightest trace of one.

Sabu has no illusions as to his future. He knows that the life of a boy star in the films is short. After *Elephant Boy* another picture, another year, perhaps at the outside two. He is saving his money. With part of it he is paying his way at a boarding school near the studios at Denham, where foreign boys are taught English. Good friends found the school for him, and he likes it. When he goes back to Mysore, as he probably will one day, he will have added to his good earthy wisdom some of the knowledge that is power.

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A COMMON FLAG FOR BRITISH FILMS

Voice from the Past

Copy of an article that appeared in "The Film Renter and Moving Picture News," March 25th, 1922, headed
AFFILIATION OF TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, by **FRANK HILL,** *Secretary of the Renters' Society.*

Personally I have for a very long time felt that an association or federation, or by whatever other title such a body would be called, must eventually be formed. It would be for the good of the industry as a whole.

If one regards the principal industries, one finds that each of them has one body which is capable of speaking and acting in vital matters for the industry as a whole. In the cinema industry, although much good work has been done by the various organisations that exist, I nevertheless think that much time is spent in considering matters of detail affecting the particular sections, which could often with advantage be left to individuals, and insufficient time is spent in concentrating upon matters which affect, or are likely to affect, the trade as a whole. If a trade body could be so constituted that it would have the absolute confidence of the industry as a whole, I think it would be all to the good of the various sections concerned, and committees of those sections could be constituted to deal more particularly in detail with matters affecting their sections.

Although the present moment (*i.e.* 1922) may perhaps be a little inopportune, I am firmly convinced that eventually, perhaps at long last, a trade body consisting of exhibitors, renters, manufacturers, and other vitally interested will have to be established. The industry is one which, to my mind, ought not to be viewed so much from the sectional standpoint, but is one which should be indivisible, seeing that it should be the object of the manufacturer to produce the very highest class of film possible without ignoring the principles of real economics; that the renter should endeavour, and, indeed, be pleased to handle only those films which would bring credit to the industry as well as profit to him; and that the exhibitor should likewise endeavour to give the very best form of entertainment procurable, paying more attention to the psychology of the human mind, and more particularly his patrons, than he has hitherto done, and bearing always in mind the power of the screen and its potency for good or evil.

Those engaged in the respective sections of the trade must look several years ahead instead of at what is happening to-day. They will then realise that each is dependent one upon the other, and that it is folly for any one section to strive to have its own way in any particular matter.

If a trade body existed, such as I envisage, there would no doubt from time to time arise matters affecting one or other of the sections, but instead of any particular section endeavouring by all the means in its power to impose its ideas upon the other sections, the final adjudication would be in the hands of that trade body, the members of which should be able to view matters from a lofty standpoint, have the capacity of long-sightedness, and be capable of sound judgment.

By The Film Council

THE chaotic state of British production finance, the "Quota Quickie" problem, conflicting views on Quota assessment, British-American rivalry, the booking controversy, the dissatisfaction voiced by a large majority of exhibitors with the present character of British films—all these symptoms selected at random by a casual glance at the trade press indicate a state of primeval anarchy and wasteful cross-purposes, wholly out of proportion to the position which the Film Industry to-day occupies in our national economy.

To mend this state of affairs, regarded as intolerable by all sections of the trade, the Moyne Committee in its recent report recommended the establishment of a Film Commission having statutory control over all sections of the industry in many matters affecting its common welfare. While administering the laws concerning the trade, it is suggested that this commission should also determine from year to year the degree of protection to be afforded by the quota to home production; that it should assess the quality of British films for the purposes of quota registration, and, presumably in view of its close association with the trade, that it should have a considerable influence on the policy of the organisation which the Moyne Committee urges the government to set up for the financing of British production.

Government Commission Rejected

Together with the other recommendations of the Moyne Committee this suggestion was submitted by the Board of Trade to the sectional organisations of the industry for their comment. While the producers organised in the Film Group of the F.B.I. give their qualified approval to the proposal, provided the suggested Committee has no power to interfere with the administration of individual businesses, and that its ability to reject films on the grounds of quality are restricted to those costing less than £1 per foot, both the renters (K.R.S.) and the exhibitors (C.E.A.) reject the idea of a government commission in principle.

All sections agree in regarding as impracticable the notion that the industry's problems can be solved by a body consisting solely of persons without expert knowledge of the film trade. The renters fear—and they are to some extent supported in this by the producers—that any control by an outside body over the financing and production of films will have the effect of discouraging prospective investors. And they regard a quality test for films as impracticable in view of the diversity of tastes they must necessarily cater for. In their view the Board of Trade is fully competent to administer any future film legislation.

The exhibitors propose, as an alternative to the suggested government commission, that a compulsory arbitration court be established by the government for the sole purpose of settling trade disputes. It should be a court of last instance to which cases are referred that cannot be settled by a voluntary conciliation joint committee set up by the three sections of the industry. This is suggested "as a means of enabling the trade to preserve its dignity, to settle its problems within itself, and to leave it with that freedom to work within reasonable limits which is so essential if progress is to be maintained."

Trade Committee Approved

Negotiations have taken place between the C.E.A. and the K.R.S. concerning this proposal. Both bodies agree to the principle of a voluntary joint committee with an independent chairman, but the renters appear to reject the exhibitors' demand for compulsory arbitration machinery.

Since, therefore, the suggestion of a large measure of government control over the industry is rejected outright by its two most powerful organisations, and in many important respects also by the producers, the trade and the public it is supposed to serve are faced with the alternative of allowing the present chaos to continue or else of finding a voluntary basis for setting the British film house in order.

The former alternative is unthinkable and will no longer be tolerated either by the public or by those who are expected to finance the industry. The latter is by no means a new problem. The article by Frank Hill, which we reprint on this page from *The Film Renter and Moving Picture News* of March 25th, 1922, shows that already 15 years ago the more clear-sighted members of the industry realised the need for a joint organisation.

Public Service Comes First

The suggestion for a joint conciliation committee advocated by the C.E.A. is a move in the right direction, especially if agreement can be reached on the principle of compulsory arbitration, but everyone will agree that it only touches the fringe of the problem. Far more important than the sett ement of inter-trade contract disputes is the standard of service which the industry as a whole provides for its many-sectioned public. On the public's increasing interest in films depends the wel-

(*Continued overleaf*)

A Common Flag (contd.)

fare of the industry in all its sections and the willingness of investors to provide its finance.

But the public is not interested how its 9*d.* entrance fee is divided among exhibitors, renters and producers. What it wants, and what therefore the industry as a whole must want, are films it considers worth spending its 9*d.* on. The fruitful collaboration between producers, renters and exhibitors, which alone can help to solve the industry's problems, must therefore go beyond the settlement of contract terms. It must penetrate to the core of the matter and guide the production—and import—policy of the films to be released in this market.

Recent experiences provide sufficient evidence for the sorry lack of contact even between two so obviously interested parties as the producers who spend the money invested in films and the exhibitors who are expected to return it. Nor is there any doubt concerning the disastrous consequences of this mutual isolation.

But to be solved, the problem requires more than the collaboration between the various sections of the industry. It requires, above all, a constant study by the trade as a whole of the public with its many audience types and their constantly changing tastes. A production policy based on a knowledge of audience tastes and agreed upon by all the sections of the trade will not only eliminate the present state of flagrant waste and provide full scope for truly creative work: it will also bring the industry to that state of prosperity that will make it easier to agree upon an equitable division of its revenue.

Guide its Policy

These ideas are by no means utopian. The establishment of a voluntary co-ordinating body to deal with the problems of the trade as a whole, to study its market, and to guide its policy, as well as to settle its internal disputes, is a necessity if the British film trade wishes to escape both from government control and from its present chaos and an ultimate control by its dissatisfied creditors.

W.F.N. therefore urges the trade to follow the lead of all the major industries at the present time and to set up its own co-ordinating organisation, recruited from representatives of all the main sections of the trade with an independent chairman and a small but highly qualified research staff. This organisation should define the code of trade practices mutually agreed upon by all concerned and act as a court of arbitration. It should also, however, act as the industry's public relations department. It should study its market and watch its constantly changing conditions. It should provide the information that will enable the trade to determine its major problems of policy and reconcile the conflicting aims of its various sections. Its experience in liaison work between the industry and its public and in helping the former to adjust its supply to the conditions of the actual demand may also in time contribute towards a solution of the censorship problem, more satisfactory than the present arrangement.

LETTERS

Ziegfeld Cut?

To suburban cinemas last week went Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's latest "picture of the generation"—the enormous, glamorous, enervating *The Great Ziegfeld* after record runs in several West End houses. Many of these cinemas in the suburbs declared in their trailers and front-of-the-house bills that the entire, uncut version was on show for their patrons' ninepence or shilling, but the alert spectator noticed one or more passages where the film had clearly been cut.

Not justified is this procedure because of *Ziegfeld's* unwieldy length, for the chances are about even that any and every West End film will be cut or mutilated before the patrons of the suburbs and provinces, who constitute the major market, get their chance to see it. This may be legally done by the film's renters, as film is a commodity of which renters buy the copyright. The exhibitor, however, merely hires the films he shows, and if the copy he returns differs from the one he hires, the renters have power to prosecute, power which is seldom if ever used. They turn a blind eye to the racket, and in any case they are not always able to tell when an exhibitor cuts, for film is a malleable product. The clever cinema-owner can make three or four cuts and replace the passages without anybody knowing but the spectator who takes an interest in films or who has seen the show before.

A happy little racket is this, for everyone but the picturegoer—who pays the piper and should call the tune. Some cinema operators even cut out cinema lovelies for their bedroom walls, and the story is told of an exhibitor who made so many cuts that the baby in a routine film about divorce and reconciliation was completely eliminated, and the audience was left mystified at the dialogue which kept referring to an apparently non-existent chee-ild.

RODERIC PAPINEAU

The Pope and Robert Herring

Quite a number of people well intentioned towards the Cinema Industry appear to be somewhat confused in their line of thinking as to the attitude and pronouncements on the Censorship of films by certain religious authorities. I have in mind particularly the Pope's Encyclical on films (Vigilante Cura) and the Legion of Decency. Both were the the object of attack in an article "Religion and the Screen," I read in the autumn issue of *Sight and Sound*. The contributor, Mr. Herring, film critic of the *Manchester Guardian*, says he could "the more readily stomach the difficulties put in the way of *St. Joan* and *Green Pastures* if he knew what encouragement they had received from Rome. The Pope answers him by anticipation in the Encyclical:

"Were it possible, it would in itself be desirable to establish a single list for the entire world, because all live under the same moral law. Since, however, there is here question of pictures which interest all classes of society, the great and the humble, the learned and the unlettered, the judgment passed upon a film cannot be the same in each case and in all respects. Indeed, circumstances, usages, and forms vary from country to country, so that it does not seem practical to have a single list for all the world."

But there is far more to be said than that. Mr. Herring's implication that the Pope envisaged only evil and subversive films is demonstrably unfair. "Good motion pictures," says the Encyclical, "are capable of exercising a profoundly moral influence upon those who see them. In addition to affording recreation, they are able to arouse noble ideals of life, to communicate valuable conceptions, to impart a better knowledge of the history and the beauties of the Fatherland and of other countries, to present truth and virtue under attractive forms, to create, or at least to favour understanding among nations, social classes, and races, to champion the cause of justice, to give new life to the claims of virtue, and to contribute positively to the genesis of a just social order in the world."

May I suggest to these critics that a deeper acquaintance with history and literature, together with a measure of common sense, will aid the digestion.

ARTHUR LESLIE

Stalemate?

You honour me by reference in the Editorial Notes of your current issue to the fact of my recent election as a Governor of the British Film Institute, on the nomination of the Film Producers' Group of the F.B.I.

But why stalemate? Is the "mate" any "staler" than it was, and if so why?

It is true that the Secretaries of two trade Organisations are now members of the Governing Body of the Institute, but they are only two among nine Governors. Is it suggested that two such "Mates" will be responsible for steering the ship into unchartered waters? May they not, perhaps, help to guide the ship on a true course?

My limited knowledge of the game of chess (I crave pardon for this mixture of metaphor) leads me to believe that there cannot be stalemate until the King is no longer able to make a move. I hope you do not infer that I am desirous, even if I were capable, of blocking up all the spaces on the board where the King might seek refuge from momentary embarrassment.

If I may say so, I venture to think you misinterpret my mission. While I will certainly do all that lies in my power to protect the interests of commercial producers should they be in need of protection in the Institute, my purpose as a Governor is and will be to assist that body and help it in its practical developments, using the influence and prestige of those who nominated me to that end as far as possible.

M. NEVILLE KEARNEY

As You Like It

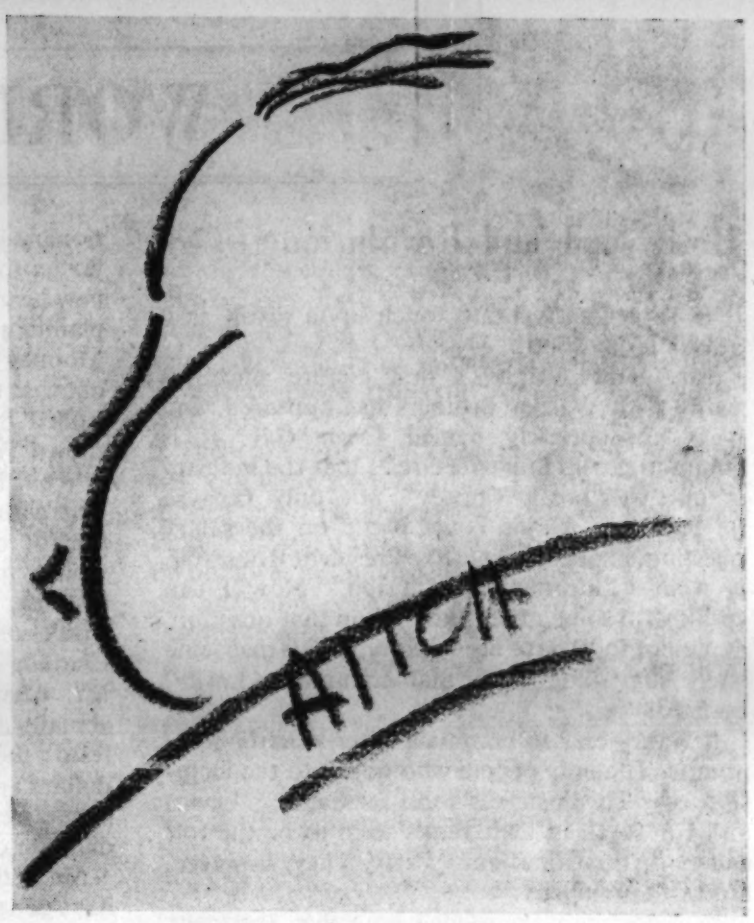
Unselfish Bergner, fame unseeking,
Your gentleness seems divine,
The shrinking blossom coyly peeping
Bows to modesty like thine.
Centuries hence, your fame still living,
You'll seem great and Shakespeare small,
They'll know it was your gracious giving
That let his name appear at all.

J. L. G.

RE-SEEING BLACKMAIL

by Harry Watt

★



HITCHCOCK made *Blackmail* during that hectic period just after Al Jolson's sobsongs had knocked the film business for a hoop. It was started silent, and had gaily gone half way on its schedule before it was realised that silent films were dead and sound films had really arrived. So with new equipment, new technicians and a new medium, Hitch finished *Blackmail* as his first sound film. And he made a grand job. There is a freshness about the approach to sound in it that is positively startling in these days of stereotyped dialogue and balanced background. Of course, the quality of the sound was frightful. Burps and hoops punctuated the conversations. Anny Ondra mouthed her shop-girl's words in front of the camera, while Joan Barry minced Mayfair into the microphone off the set. But in spite of all this the fact remains that in *Blackmail* Hitch didn't think of sound as a new trick to put words into his characters' mouths—he thought of it as a new dramatic medium, something with which to build up suspense, drama, and interest. In the silent sections he used music. Music for reels at a time. And it worked. The action was quicker and just as intense. There was no feeling of artificiality through lack of speech. And where there was speech it was used almost wholly for dramatic effect, not to prove to the audience that the actors had uvulas and larynxes.

The story is of a shop-girl who, tiring of her police boy friend, gets off with an artist who takes her to his flat and tries to rape her. He gets stabbed to death with a knife in the struggle. The girl is seen leaving the flat by a cadger type who recognises her. After the killing the girl wanders the streets all night and then goes home and slips into bed just before the time her mother comes to waken her. She is in a state of complete hysteria, expecting to be arrested at any moment. Meanwhile the police boy friend is investigating the case. He finds the girl's glove at the artist's flat and comes round to her house to question her. The cadger turns up too, and tries to blackmail him. Eventually, the cadger gets accused of the murder and, in a panic, runs away and is killed.

By intelligent use of sound, Hitchcock made this sordid story memorable. The first time he did it was when the girl was wandering in the street after the killing. The last she had seen of the dead man was his hand sticking out from a curtain. So as she wandered the streets she was obsessed with hands. She saw huge hands everywhere: policemen's, paper-sellers', touts'. Suddenly she saw a beggar asleep. His hand lay just as the dead man's hand had done. She opened her mouth to shriek. And the shriek came from the mouth of the artist's landlady finding the body! It's been done again but never so well as this, the first time. Again, when the girl has sneaked home to bed, just before her mother comes in to waken her, the mother fusses with the canary that sings of freedom and happiness while the camera concentrates on the girl, half mad with fear of imprisonment and hanging. And then when she comes down to breakfast, the talk is all of the near-by murder. A gossipy neighbour, full of it, begins to elaborate on the horror of knifing. She harps again and again on the word 'knife'. Gradually the rest of her words become weaker but 'knife' goes on. Soon to the distorted mind of the girl, the neighbour is no longer gossiping. We hear, as the girl hears, the shrill voice repeating horribly, monotonously, "Knife—Knife—Knife." And we grip our seats with the sheer terror of it.

To her every ring of the bell means the police. The bell seems to be always ringing. And every one louder, more ominous. Suddenly, the bell rings again. But this time it rings differently. It is higher, fiercer, more metallic. The sound is forced up until it seems to go through you. It frightens you. And it introduces the blackmailer!

All through the film there occur these imaginative uses of sound. They may be criticised as unreal but in point of fact they are not. Everyone helped to get across to the audience the reality of the girl's terror, the reality of her suspense. Why should sound on the screen always be real? We all know that a door bangs or a clock ticks. But what we should want to hear is how the noises sound to the characters we are seeing. In *Blackmail* you saw an imaginative melodramatic director suddenly given an extra medium to play with. And he accepted it as one would expect, solely to produce extra dramatic effect. With such a beginning we could have hoped that by now imaginative sound in films would have been an accepted fact. But it is not. Almost always any sound that is not the direct complement of the picture is looked on as highbrow and arty. It is sneered at as being vague and obscure. Why? The sound in *Blackmail* didn't obscure. It clarified, every time. How much could be done with modern films overloaded as they are with dialogue, by the use of these early "tricks',' if you like to call them that. But no, the characters must sit around and tell us just how they feel and exactly what they're going to do next. None of Hitchcock's latest films use sound with the same imagination. Why has screen sound become dead? One solution may be that the creative minds have been overwhelmed by the large new body of sound technicians, terribly clever, terribly earnest, and terribly dull. Their one desire seems to be to get sound more and more like the real thing. But no fancy stuff. "A bell is a bell, old boy. Never a gong."

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WORLD OPINION

Hollywood and Revolution

IT MIGHT BE WELL to touch upon revolt as it affects Hollywood.

Mr. James Cagney's first picture since his battle with Warner Brothers has appeared, and it is appropriately named *Great Guy*. It is common gossip in movie circles that the industry is out to "break Cagney" not only because he put up a terrific court battle on the salary question, but because he, like President Roosevelt, is what California calls "a red." Now I can speak with some understanding on that question, as a lot of folks have been writing to this magazine lately suggesting that "that communist Levin" be fired.

It is very easy to become a letter-writer's communist. The only people who object to the inclusion of such illustrious folks as Cagney, Levin, and Roosevelt in their ranks seem to be the roll callers of the Communist Party. They, however, are in the minority.

It is common knowledge now that President Roosevelt's campaign was directed and financed from Moscow, and a good job they did of it too. I get my movie reviews in mimeographed form from the same place: they are even so clever as to have English translators over there so I don't have to go to any trouble at all. As to Mr. Cagney, he tipped his hand several years ago when, along with such communists as the judge who sentenced Tom Mooney, he joined in the movement toward getting Mr. Mooney a new trial.

To speak up for Tom Mooney is enough for Hollywood. Shortly afterward Mr. Cagney, who was working on an old contract, demanded a rise. He also wanted to work in fewer and better pictures. It will be recalled that Mr. Cagney has often expressed his desire to appear in such plays as those of Mr. O'Casey. Maybe that proved him a dangerous red, too. Howbeit, Mr. Cagney had to go to court; he won his case, was freed of his contract, but found that there was not much enthusiastic bidding for his services. The moviemakers let each other understand that anyone who could beat them in court was a dangerous red.

There was, however, a new company forming, the Grand National, chiefly interested in producing class B pictures for the double bills. They wanted at least one big name, and they got Cagney. *Great Guy* is his first picture with the new company, and his first picture since "the trouble."

Cagney himself is as good as ever, and in general the film is not bad. All that's wrong is that it lacks the sharp slick expert construction of the more expensive Hollywood products. It simply smacks of a second-rate studio. Mr. Cagney does not deserve this, and his public should be indignant that movie politics has put him into such a position. As to revolution in Hollywood, I understand that a few more daring steps have been made. When I was there last summer, I was invited with great secrecy to a gathering at the home of a high-salaried movie personage. This gathering consisted of Hollywood's *avant garde*—the real bloody revolutionary liberals who were almost ready to go so far as to say that Tom Mooney ought to get a new hearing. The meeting was for the purpose of planning the release of a film in which Tom Mooney speaks in his own defence. I should point out that the newsreels of this country are all controlled by Moscow because the newsreels have shown Tom Mooney pleading for a new hearing.

Well, I had to promise not to tell who was at that gathering as such persons might suffer the fate of other Hollywood reds. I am going to violate my blood-signed oath, however, in one instance. I think the person I am going to name won't suffer because he is his own boss. Charles Chaplin was there. Of course we all know that Mr. Chaplin's last movie, *Modern Times*, was actually a picturisation of the Communist Manifesto; the fact that it grossed over four million dollars and was at the top of the list as the most profitable picture of the year only proves the diabolic cunning of the Moscow propagandists.

Since that time, a few Hollywood celebrities have gone so far as to contribute money openly to the striking Salinas lettuce-pickers, and now I understand that they are going to free Tom Mooney again. I only hope they take warning from such ex-communists as Mr. Cagney and myself, and let innocent people remain in jail.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

Castles in Spain

WHY NOT A MOVIE of Sean O'Casey's "Within the Gates," directed by John Ford, with Lillian Gish in her original role?

And Shaw's *Candida*, directed by King Vidor, with Katherine Cornell in her original role; Frank Lawton as Marchbanks, and Leslie Howard as Morell.

A new version of *Three Loves* (done once before as a silent film in Germany) from the novel by Max Brod, with Marlene Dietrich in her original role as Stasha, Fritz Kortner, who should be imported for his original role as Dr. Karkos, and Gary Cooper as the third corner of the triangle. To be directed by Josef von Sternberg, of course.

Speaking of Pabst, imagine what a trenchant film the director of *Die Dreigroschenoper* and *Kameradschaft* could make of Andre Malraux' magnificent study of the Chinese revolution, "Man's Fate." . . .

Or a film based on the life of Nijinsky with, perhaps, Paul Muni as Nijinsky, and certainly Charles Laughton as Diaghilev.

And speaking of great personalities, why not a film on the life of Van Gogh (after Irving Stone's book, "Lust for Life") with Peter Lorre playing the mad Dutch genius? Or a film version of Somerset Maugham's "Moon and Sixpence," based on the life of Gauguin, actually filmed in the South Seas, directed by Van Dyck, and starring John Barrymore as Gauguin. And, while we're at it, can you picture Fritz Kortner as Beethoven, Claude Rains as Napoleon, Jean Hersholt as Brahms? These would make splendid biographical films with world-wide appeal! Think of Veidt as Paganini!

—Herman G. Weinberg

More British than the British

A GOOD IDEA IN the movie industry, like gas, is sure to expand when it is released, and the English influence has now spread to, of all exotic places, England. Since the now legendary *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, there has been a profound renaissance of English home product, and parallel to it a soft-pedalling of potential celluloid nationalism. There was no need for it. It could be handled so capably and enthusiastically by the Americans. But once the Britons discovered with proper amaze that they could make good movies (and they can) it became a certainty that they would plunge into the dignified vortex of their own history. To date we have seen here the sanguinary and highly commendable *Nine Days a Queen*, celebrating the decapitation of Lady Jane Grey, and we are shortly to be afforded a glimpse at *Fire Over England*, an Elizabethan drama that should turn up shortly at the music hall.

Fire Over England carries an adventitious interest, aside from its dramaturgical worth, because it is the first historical movie to be made at the Korda studios since the sanctified *Private Life of Henry VIII*.

The Korda adventure carries with it much of the spirit that attaches to the Hollywood product —with a geographical modification. The Korda studios are located in England. But Korda, of course, is a Hungarian. The producer of *Fire Over England* is a German, Erich Pommer; the director is William K. Howard, an American.

You can observe that the strange aptitude (not the inclination: that will always remain a brilliant mystery) of foreigners like Americans and Hungarians for capturing the elusive essence of British tradition in historical movies is anything but strange. Familiarity, to risk a platitude, breeds contempt. The English themselves are a little bit too close to their past to view it with anything like engrossing interest. It is too much a part of their everyday ethos. But foreigners, on the other hand, can back off and take a long view and be attracted, and be moved to want to get an immortal imprimatur on celluloid.

Hence when you see *Fire Over England* you will probably be impressed all over again with the painstaking attention to detail, the fetichising of accuracy. It is principally the story of the defeat of Philip of Spain's swollen Armada by the small but snappy English fleet. In each department of the movie, historic detail is handled with reverence and awe. Elizabeth's nose, carried defiantly by that excellent actress Flora Robson, is precise in size and proportion to the last millimetre. A song that was written by Henry VIII was exhumed for use in the picture. Elizabeth's last minute pep-talk to the soldiery at Tilbury is composed almost entirely of Elizabeth's actual words.

In short, *Fire Over England* sets out to be as utterly British in spirit as it is possible for a non-Britisher to be—that is, more British than you would think it possible to be under any mortal circumstance.

—*New York Sunday Times*

WORLD OPINION

The Scottish Idiom

SCOTSMEN WHO HAVE a decent pride in their birthplace must grieve to see their history, their habits, and their clothes travestied by films made by aliens. Yet it would be much worse if these films were made at home. The music hall, gaily encouraged by Scotsmen, has travestied our nation, but never so viciously and savagely as the films have done. I am proud to belong to a clan by direct descent; I am not a sept of anything, nor a Highlander by condescension of the tartan-makers' manuals; but I cannot wear my own tartan now, and partly because the film-makers clothed Ayrshire hips in kilts, in their rendering of Burns's wedding, and clad Bothwell in a kilt to enchant the extraordinary Mary of the recent *Mary Queen of Scots*.

We ourselves have done our best to make ourselves comic objects of derision on the screen. We have popularised and sold a false picture of our country. We have made a comic strip of Scotland.

It is a great pity that we have been so successful in making Scotland a silly object full of romance, glamour, Loch Ness monsters, naked knees and mother love, because Scotland has something to give which Hollywood cannot provide. I do not mean our scenery or romantic episodes in our history. So far as scenery is concerned, the face of Scotland is entirely composed of features, mostly blank. And the romantic episodes in our history are not Scottish but Stuart. Scottish history is not romantic. It is dour, savage, furious, enlivened solely by the lust for freedom which possessed our ancestors, and dignified by a determined callous self-sacrificing political strife. The words of Wallace's uncle to his nephew are more important and significant in Scottish history than Mary Queen of Scots. Henry VIII represented something in England, Mary represented nothing in Scotland. But John Knox did.

Scotland might provide subjects for historical films which would introduce a novel seriousness and fury into the cinema. They might also help to upset the sad theory, on which most films are made, that the camera cannot lie. So that this bleak theory may not be controverted, the cinema clings to lifelikeness; it exaggerates but does not forsake truth and reason as other arts do. Mickey Mouse, the child of the sacred-serious fairy-tale, is not serious but funny, not fantastic but ludicrous. Children laugh at Mickey Mouse, but they do not laugh at the three bears. Scotland is not a country that loves the ludicrous. It hates and scourges the ludicrous with savage wit. The country of the ballads and of the flyting proverbs might provide a corrective for the silliness of modern films which ape reality, and make reality play the buffoon, instead of forgetting reality in the self-contained fantastic serious world of art.

I hope that if we ever have Scottish films they will take our history out of fancy dress: that they will keep the quality which makes our ballads live: in the country where men said—

> Ower his white banes when they are bare
> The wind sall blaw for evermair.

Men in kilts and knights in armour are needless things, an impertinence indeed.

But what is valuable, what is inspiring, what is terrifying in Scotland is the bitter eloquent political life of our country in the past. If that can be portrayed in Scottish films we shall have given something of value to the new art. And perhaps some Scottish producer may remember that all through our history men have been remembered by their words more than by their deeds, and only the unlucky weak have been remembered by their faces. The human voice is the loveliest instrument of music. Its range is widest and most moving in the world. Wallace's speech to his men, Wallace's uncle's words to his nephew, King James's address to his soul, the eloquence of our ballads and the flyting of our proverbs came from a nation which put its soul into its speech. And if the cinema ever finds its soul it will be in words. I hope that they may be Scottish.

—Ian Macpherson, *Glasgow Herald*

Hitchcock on Stories

WE WANT TO FIND A STORY. We meet and talk. We read the reviews—we have no time to read the whole books. We pore over notices of plays. We discuss every possible type of story—and that brings me to the first prime requisite for a film story.

It must blend two things which seem almost mutually exclusive: it must hang on one single central idea which must never get out of the minds of the audience for one single solitary minute, either consciously or subconsciously; and it must offer scope for the introduction of a number of elements, which you have read about every single picture that has ever been produced: glamour, suspense, romance, charm, drama, emotion, and so forth.

The formula for making a picture is to find a single problem which is sufficiently enthralling to hold the attention of the people who are watching the play unfold, and yet not sufficiently difficult to demand uncomfortable concentration.

The reason murder mysteries are not often great successes on the screen is because they demand too much acute concentration: the audience is keyed up to watching for clues, listening for clues, trying to glean from every line of dialogue some light into the mystery.

The true motion picture formula is to state in the first reel your single central theme which must be a problem. It may be of the simplest: "Boy meets girl; boy falls for girl; boy quarrels with girl; boy and girl come together again."

There the problem is: Will they be reconciled? And the corollaries are: How long before they are reconciled? How will they be reconciled? . . .

The difficulty of writing a motion picture story is to make things not only logical but visual. You have got to be able to see why someone does this; see why someone goes there. It is no use telling people; they have got to SEE. We are making pictures, moving pictures, and though sound helps and is the most valuable advance the films have ever made they still remain primarily a visual art.

There are very few—astonishingly few—people who can write a screen story. There are no chapter-headings; no intervals between the acts. The fading in and fading out are so quick that they do not give the audience time to discuss and work out and think over what they have seen and why they have seen it.

—Alfred Hitchcock, *News Chronicle*

Television in the U.S.A.

THE ENGINEERS have succeeded in simplifying television receivers by reducing the number of controls from 14 to 10 and the number of tubes from 33 to 26. . . . Also the greenish tint that has characterised television pictures in the majority of past demonstrations has been overcome. The sound part of the television show is already equal to the best broadcast receivers and . . . helps to a great extent in holding the spectator's interest in the pictures, now measuring 7½ by 10 inches.

There can be no doubt that television must eventually offer larger pictures to possess real entertainment value and to lure the eye as do the movies. . . . One head eclipses the screen. Therefore the seats must be arranged stagger fashion if all are to see the performance. And everyone to see clearly should not be more than five feet from the machine.

The big cathode ray tube or "eye" of the receiver . . . measures twelve inches across. It costs about £20 and has a life of about 1,000 hours before burning out. Until this tube can be reduced in price and its period of service lengthened television sets will be expensive, probably between £60 and £120.

Close-ups are by far most interesting on the screen. When the electric camera attempts more than head-to-waist views it loses detail. For example, an entire jazz band is not effective by present television because the players are so far away that they look like so many toothpicks. . . .

So far in television demonstrations showmanship has been sadly missing. . . . The artistic side of television needs showmen and needs them badly. It is most apparent that the scenic designers, make-up experts and all those artisans who go to make the stage and movies what they are have not found their way into television as yet; when they do they will find it necessary to learn many new tricks.

The television actor and speaker is warned that he is most effective when he memorises his lines, otherwise he is continually ducking his head to read the manuscript. And a reporter at a television show must memorise too; the room is darker than a movie theatre because the small television screen sheds little light and the reviewer of the television performance cannot make notes in the dark.

—Orrin E. Dunlap, *N.Y. Sunday Times*

PEOPLE OF THE STUDIOS

Denham

As the financial crisis of the British Film Industry came to a head with Gaumont-British revelations, Korda announced his future plans. In doing so he sent the message to his staff: "I hope that all will be glad to hear of these productions after the recent month of quiet time, and that all will do their utmost to guarantee the success of these future productions."

Victor Saville has started work on two pictures: *Action for Slander*, directed by Tim Whelan, and *Bicycle for Two*, the film originally scheduled for René Clair, a technicolour musical under Saville's personal direction. A third subject, *South Riding*, is also ready for shooting.

Victor Saville

Merle Oberon's accident last month caused an indefinite postponement of *I, Claudius*, directed by Josef von Sternberg, and it is possible that production will have to be abandoned altogether owing to the expiry of Charles Laughton's contract. Before the hold-up, the call for artists had been altered from the usual 9 o'clock to 8.30 in the morning to allow time for elaborate make-ups. Flora Robson, who played the part of an old and dissolute woman with wrinkled and baggy skin, suffered daily for three hours in the hands of make-up expert Guy Pearce. Agnes de Mille, daughter of William de Mille, the once equally famous director brother of Cecil, had been coaching Miss Oberon for her ballet. Miss de Mille was choreographer with the Ballet Rambert.

* * *

Gaumont-British

A few days ago "Cease Work" sounded in the six big stages at Shepherd's Bush, and an era in the history of Gaumont-British reached an end. At a cost of £300,000, the Ostrer Brothers built the studios in 1932—90,000 square feet of floor space, restaurant and dressing rooms to hold six hundred, an orchestration theatre, fifteen cutting rooms, sixty-two film vaults, carpenters', plasterers' and modelling shops. All these are to become a printing laboratory, and headquarters for Gaumont-British News. A gigantic laboratory and a gigantic headquarters.

The history of this company dates back to 1895, when Leon Gaumont, a contemporary of Pathé and Lumière, founded a company in Paris to make films with a single portable camera. The English rights of his pictures were held by the Bromhead Brothers in a little office at Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road.

In 1902 Gaumont set up the first English production studio in a corner of Freeman's Cricket Ground, Dulwich, where *Lost a Leg of Mutton* and *Curfew Shall Not Ring To-night* were both produced. Before the beginning of the war, the company had made talking pictures of George Robey and Harry Lauder, by means of a waxed cylinder record, and had made the world's first newsreel.

The first Shepherd's Bush Studios were built in 1915, the Ostrer brothers taking over production in 1931. In 1932 they were rebuilt, and since then they have given us such films as *Rome Express*, *Thirty-Nine Steps*, *I Was a Spy*, *Rhodes of Africa*, *It's Love Again*, *Head over Heels*, *Sabotage*, and *The Great Barrier; King Solomon's Mines* and *Non-Stop New York* are in the cutting room, and *Take My Tip* is ready for exhibition.

Pinewood has taken over and the cameras are turning on *Gangway*, in which Jessie Matthews plays the part of a sob-sister on a London newspaper. The script is by Lesser Samuels, and Sonnie Hale, responsible for *Head Over Heels*, is directing.

At Gainsborough, Gaumont's subsidiary at Islington, production continues. Will Mahoney and Will Fyffe, as an Irish-American adventurer and a Scottish business man respectively, are the stars of *Said O'Reilly to MacNab*, now on the floor under William Beaudine, director of *Windbag the Sailor*. *O-Kay for Sound*, Marcel Varnel's Crazy Gang film, is in the cutting room.

* * *

Pinewood

Norman Walker, whose *Turn of the Tide*, a film of Yorkshire fisher people, broke away magnificently from studio leg-bound traditions and created great enthusiasm among the critics, may not find a sequel easily forthcoming. Word of mouth publicity brought *Turn of the Tide* fame in unlikely quarters, but at the box-office it did not fully reflect the critics' enthusiasm. Walker's new picture is called *Sunset in Vienna*. Tullio Carminati plays an Italian officer whose marriage to a beautiful Viennese girl (Lilli Palmer) is wrecked by the outbreak of hostilities. Carminati throws everything overboard at the conclusion of the war for a care-free, bohemian life, and drifts down the social scale, ending as a café singer in Port Said. Which seems to prove that there is box-office safety in distance from England.

* * *

Nova Pilbeam—who, though only seventeen, one hesitates to call a child star (in *The Lady of La Paz* she married twice and had a baby)—is to move to Pinewood with Gaumont-British, where Hitchcock is making *A Shilling for Candles*.

A new-comer to the rank of "juveniles" in England is Dilwyn Thomas, fourteen-year-old son of a Rhondda Valley miner. After some voice training he toured Great Britain with the Royal Mastersingers. For the last three years he has won honour at the Eisteddfod at Aberdare. Screen debut in *The Gang Show*, now cutting under Herbert Wilcox at Pinewood.

Michael Balcon

M.G.M.

Ben Goetz, supervisor of the M.G.M. studios in England, has made two additions to his staff, Sidney Gilliatt, who has been associated with Michael Balcon since the opening of Shepherd's Bush studios, has been signed to work both here and in Hollywood. Gilliatt's work for Gaumont-British includes the screen plays of *Rome Express*, *Chu Chin Chow*, and *King of the Damned*, and the original story of *Friday the Thirteenth*.

* * *

Roland Pertwee, the novelist and dramatist, is writing the dialogue of *Rage in Heaven*, which will be one of the first films to go into production. Angus McPhail and S. C. Balcon are preparing the script. Ben Goetz has been in Hollywood for ten days discussing the final details of casting and direction with Louis B. Mayer. Michael Balcon has also made a trip to the States prior to the launching of actual production here.

* * *

Ealing

Sarah Churchill is playing the lead in *Secretary in Trouble*, a Dorian production which went into production early last month. It is an English version of the German film *Der Herrwohnung*, and the cast cast includes Vic Oliver, Romney Brent, and Margaret Lockwood. Carol Reed, responsible for *Midshipman Easy* (his first film), *Laburnum Grove* and *Talk of the Devil* (see "Review of Reviews"), is directing.

Josef von Sternberg

People of the Studios (continued)

Teddington

Sir Seymour Hicks, actor and playwright, has now written his own screen story, entitled *Sand in the Sugar*.

* * *

Two other Warner Brothers First National pictures now in production are *Have You Come or Me?* a comedy with Claude Hulbert and Glenda Farrell; and *The Man Who Made Diamonds*, a melodrama directed by Ralph Ince. Max Miller, who came into the limelight with *Educated Evans*, is also to make two films directed by William Beaudine.

* * *

Irish Free State

The Miser, a new Irish film by Thomas Cooper, director of *The Dawn*, has gone into production at the Hibernia Studios, Killarney. Work has also begun on a film of the Irish troubles, to be released about the middle of the year.

* * *

Australia

Cinesound, Australia's only producing unit, has completed *It Isn't Done*, due for première next Easter, and *Tall Timber* is in the cutting room. *Lovers and Luggers*, a story of the pearl fisheries, will soon begin, and in August work is scheduled on *Gone to the Dogs*, a comedy by George Wallace. Further stories are being prepared to allow for continuous production.

* * *

Egypt

H. Cramp, a Nazi refugee who formerly worked for Ufa, is chief of Egypt's most modern film studio, built near the Pyramids. Financed by the Bank Misr, the studios claim to be better equipped than any individual studio in Hollywood, being fitted with up-to-the-minute lighting, photographic and sound-reproducing plants. Cramp, assisted by two other Nazi victims, has been scouring Palestine, Syria and Iraq for material, the chief aim of the company being to produce Arabic films for Arabic people.

* * *

Italy

Following Italy's colonial enterprise, Africa is now the leading feature in Italian films. *Scipio the African* is now in production, and recently two aeroplanes and four banana freighters set out to Italian Somaliland to make *Marrabo*, to be directed by Romolo Marcellini and produced by Gono-Romo. The script is by Marcella Orana, an authority on the customs, languages and costumes of Somaliland.

Germany

At the Ufa studios Willy Fritsch and Lilian Harvey are working on *Sieben Ohrfeigen* ("Soundly Spanked"). The script is by B. E. Lüthge and Paul Martin, who is also directing. Music by Peter Kreuder.

Miss Harvey was born in London, and has appeared in British, French and Swedish pictures, but is now under contract to Ufa. Herr Fritsch has acted in Germany, his home country, ever since he decided to give up engineering for the stage, and is one of Ufa's highest paid stars.

* * *

At the end of February production began in the Tobis studios on *Die Ganz Grossen Torheiten*, starring Paula Wessely and Rudolf Forster and directed by Carl Froelich, the first German director to be awarded the title of Professor.

Both Hollywood and England suffered a loss last month by the deaths of two old hands at character parts—Sir Guy Standing and Frank Vosper.

Standing, who was 64 last September, made his stage debut at the Criterion Theatre, London, in 1889, and signed his first film contract with Zukor in 1914. He was released from this, however, at the outbreak of the War, and was knighted in England in 1919. His most famous rôle was probably Colonel Stone in *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*. He had recently signed a contract with Paramount to play the lead in a colour version of *Beau Geste*.

Frank Vosper will be remembered particularly for his parts in *Jew Süss*, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, *Heart's Desire* and *The Secret of Stamboul*. He had been on the stage for some years before coming to the screen, making his debut in 1919 at Mile End, and a year later appearing in the West End. He has since written, produced, and acted in many successful plays.

On the Continent, as well as in Hollywood, best-sellers and big names in the literary world are playing a large part in 1937 film production. In France novels of Tolstoi and Oscar Wilde are finding their way on to the screen. Marcel L'Herbier is adapting Tolstoi's *The Living Corpse* for Pathé, re-titling it *La Nuit de Feu;* and Jean Choux is at work on Wilde's *Une Femme Sans Importance*, scripted by Charles Spaak. In Italy, *I Fratelli Castiglioni*, comedy by Alberto Colantuoni, which has been translated into six languages and won considerable success in Europe, is to be filmed under the direction of Corrada D'Errico. Tobis, in Germany, has *Man Spricht Uber Jacqueline* ("Gossip about Jacqueline") in the cutting room, taken from the novel by Katrin Holland and directed by Werner Hochbaum.

France

The French Government, following in the tracks of our Moyne Committee, is out to investigate all problems of film production that have arisen in the country. Headed by Jean-Michel Renaitour, and composed of more than two hundred deputies, it is hoping to interview all the important personalities of the industry, visit the principal studios, and aid the producers. Renaitour denies that the ultimate aim of the investigation is to create a state-controlled industry. "But we do want," he says, "to help an industry which employs thousands of persons and invests enormous amounts of capital each year."

Meanwhile, the Government continues its production plans for *La Marseillaise*, film of the French Revolution to be made by Jean Renoir, who was recently awarded the Legion of Honour.

* * *

A documentary film of the Pasteur Institute is being made in Paris. J. Chausey has been given a free hand by Doctor Martin, director of the Institute, so that he can present a truthful account of its accomplishments.

* * *

It seems that Eric von Stroheim is staying away from Hollywood. *Marthe Richard* completed, Renoir has engaged him to play in *La Grande Illusion*, a rôle in which Louis Jouvet was originally cast. The plot, by Renoir and Charles Spaak, centres round the experiences of a prisoner of war. Stroheim has also made a tentative promise to direct the as yet unscripted *Tzigane* ("Gipsy").

* * *

Hollywood

Scripts for biographical films on three classical composers are being prepared in Hollywood. Columbia is making *Chopin*, with Francis Lederer in the title rôle; Warner Brothers has scheduled *Beethoven* with Paul Muni, and M.G.M. promises *Johann Strauss*.

* * *

William Wyler, director of Sam Goldwyn's *Dodsworth* and co-director of *Come and Get It*, has been selected by Goldwyn to direct Sidney Kingsley's play *Dead End*, a study of gangster life, adapted for the screen by Lillian Hellman, author of "The Children's Hour" (Film: *These Three*). Humphrey Bogart, screen villain, plays "Baby Face Martin."

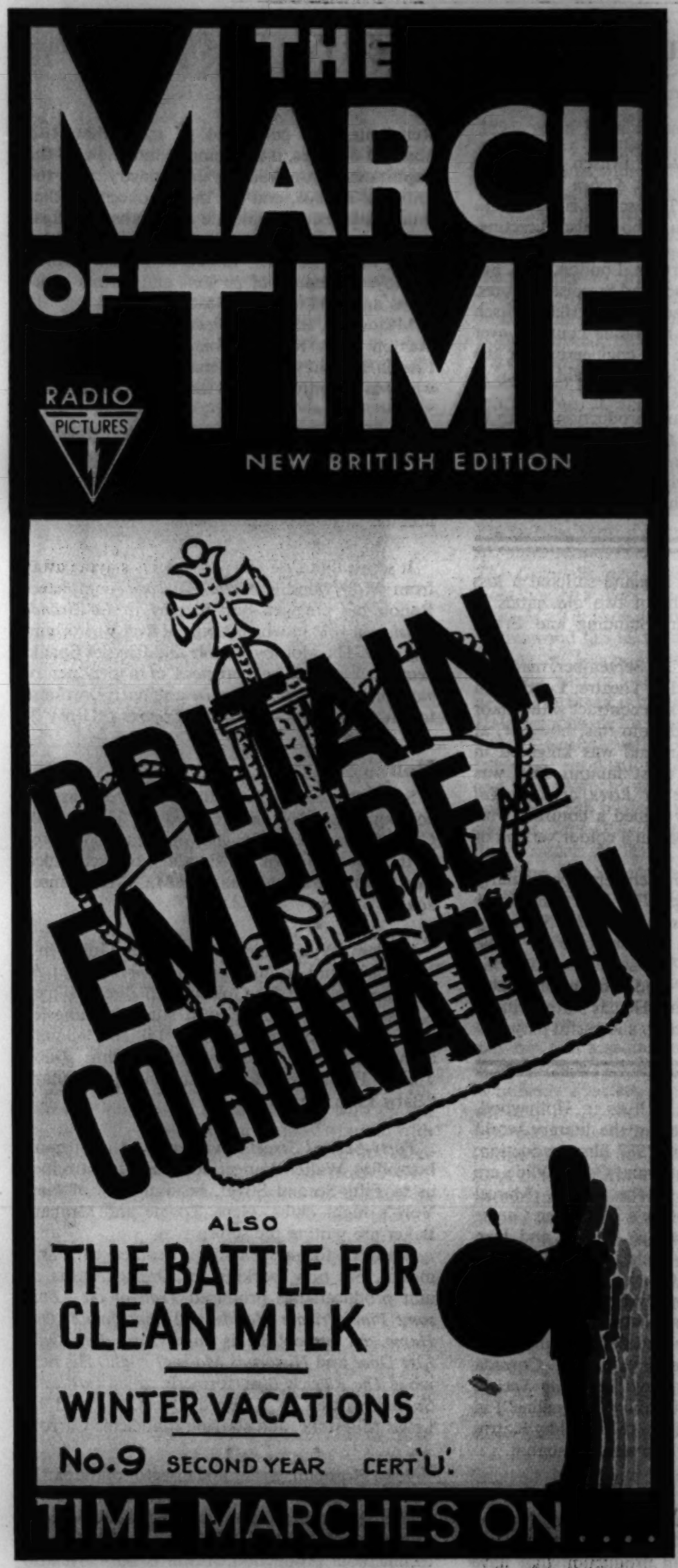
* * *

Forty-Second Street having proved itself good box-office, Walter Wanger now plans to introduce us to Fifty-Second Street, headquarters of New York's night clubs. Gene Towne and Graham Baker are writing the screen play.

Wanger, formerly under contract to Paramount, but now working for United Artists as unit producer, has produced *Trail of the Lonesome Pine*, *Private Worlds*, and *The Moon is Our Home*. At present he is supervising *You Only Live Once* and *History is Made at Night*. His next job is *The River is Blue* (formerly called *Castles in Spain*), written by Clifford Odets, directed by Lewis Milestone, and starring Madeleine Carroll.

* * *

John Hoffman, writer and director of the earthquake sequences in *San Francisco*, has been signed by David O. Selznick to produce special dramatic transitions for Selznick International's technicolour production, *A Star is Born*. He also did the montage scenes in *The Great Ziegfeld*.



LIST OF BOOKINGS TO MATURE ON "MARCH OF TIME" SECOND YEAR

For its second year "MARCH OF TIME" has arranged contracts for showing in more than 1200 Cinemas. Below is a selection from a list that covers the British Isles and Irish Free State.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
Forum ...	Southampton.
Futurist ...	Birmingham.
Plaza ...	Regent Street.
Paramount ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Capitol ...	Cardiff.
Westover ...	Bournemouth.
Kings ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Manchester.
Whiteladies	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Liverpool.
Regal ...	Torquay.
Paramount ...	Leeds.
Paramount ...	Newcastle.
Paramount ...	Glasgow.
Savoy ...	Brighton.
Astoria ...	Cliftonville.
Granada ...	Dover.
Central or Playhouse	Folkestone.
Rivoli ...	Southend.
Regent ...	Gt. Yarmouth.
Marina ...	Lowestoft.
Majestic or Ritz	Oxford.
Super Electra, Palace	Oxford.
Olympia ...	Newport, Mon.
Castle ...	Merthyr.
Beau Nash ...	Bath.
Pavilion ...	Ramsgate.
Silver Cinema	Worcester.
Theatre Royal	Preston
Synod Hall	Edinburgh.
Palace Grand or Winter Gdn.	Blackpool.
Capitol ...	Dublin.
Grafton ...	Dublin.
Odeon ...	South Harrow.
Empire ...	Mile End.
Empress ...	Hackney.
Commodore	Hammersmith.
Forum ...	Fulham Road.
Forum ...	Ealing.
Dominion ...	Southall.
Embassy ...	Harrow.
Carlton ...	Winchmore Hill.
Ritz ...	Bowes Park.
Cameo ...	Bear Street.
Alma or Empire	Luton.
Bruce Grove	Tottenham.
Coliseum ...	Harrow.
Tatler ...	Charing Cross Road.
Tussauds ...	Baker Street.
Lido ...	Golders Green.
Ritz ...	Edgware.
South Cinema	Hackney.
Hippodrome	Willesden.
Ritz ...	Neasden.
Olympia ...	Shoreditch.
Palaceum ...	Commercial Road.
Rialto, Plaza or Ritz	Maidenhead.
Hippodrome	Poplar.
Rex	Stratford.
Carlton ...	Upton Park.
Palace ...	Kensal Rise.
Coronation	Manor Park.
Capitol ...	Barking.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
Princess ...	Dagenham.
Blue Hall ...	Edgware Road.
Dominion ...	Walthamstow.
Queens ...	Bayswater.
Regal ...	Uxbridge.
Majestic ...	Woodford.
Ritz ...	Harringay.
Savoy ...	Acton.
Savoy ...	Enfield.
Curzon ...	Mayfair.
Tatler ...	Liverpool.
Kings ...	Liverpool.
Princes ...	Liverpool.
Empire ...	Chatham.
Ritz Central or Palace	Maidstone.
Pavilion ...	Cork
Grand Central	Dublin.
Majestic, Regal Super or Plaza	Gravesend.
Victoria ...	Cambridge.
Hippodrome	Rotherhithe.
Palace ...	Camberwell.
Playhouse ...	Balham.
Mayfair ...	Tooting.
Majestic ...	Mitcham.
Savoy ...	Croydon.
Hippodrome	Croydon.
Regal ...	Purley.
Majestic or St. James	Kings Lynn.
Savoy ...	Wandsworth
Prince of Wales	Lewisham.
Capitol ...	Forest Hill.
Capitol ...	Blackheath.
Theatre ...	Elephant & Castle.
Hippodrome	Putney.
Savoy ...	Teddington.
Trocadero ...	Southport.
Wembley Hall Cinema.	Wembley.
Odeon ...	Wimbledon.
Odeon ...	Barnet.
Hippodrome or Empire	Greenwich.
Odeon ...	Haverstock Hill.
State & Rialto	Dartford.
Odeon ...	Finchley.
Dominion ...	Hounslow.
Cranstons ...	Glasgow.
Hippodrome	Belfast.
Odeon ...	Derby.
Palace ...	Leicester.
Theatre Royal	Bradford.
Pioneer ...	Dewsbury.
Theatre Royal	Halifax.
Hippodrome	Sheffield.
Princes ...	Portsmouth.
Tivoli or Troxy	Portsmouth.
Cinema ...	Aberdare.
Radio Centre	East Grinstead.
Exchange ...	Lincoln.
Regal ...	Watford.
Odeon ...	Chingford.
Ritz ...	Doncaster.
Dorchester.	Hull.
Majestic ...	West Hartlepool.
Elite ...	Middlesbrough.

People of the Studios (*contd.*)

Hollywood

New idea in Hollywood is to have a singing stand-in—for if the star's time and energy can be saved for action rehearsals, why not for singing as well? After being introduced by Grace Moore, and later adopted by Lily Pons and other singing stars, Robert Riskin went further and used a talking stand-in for his film *When You're in Love*.

* * *

The primary reason for Grace Moore's forthcoming visit to England and the Continent is a somewhat unusual one. Her pictures are made on a percentage basis, and as certain countries—such as Germany and Italy—prohibit the export of money, her only course is to spend it there. Miss Moore has no objection to occasional holidays abroad. She comes to England first.

* * *

Trouble has recently been brewing in the States owing to the unauthorized use of film gags and comedy bits on the air. M.G.M. began the feud between radio and screen when material from the Marx Brothers' *A Day at the Races* was broadcast, and several sequences had to be re-shot. Other studios discovered that their wisecracks had been finding their way into radio programmes, and combined together to investigate where the leakage occurred.

* * *

With the engagement of Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. and Raymond Massey for two big rôles in Anthony Hope's *The Prisoner of Zenda*, the cast is now complete. Other players are Ronald Colman, Madeleine Carroll, Mary Astor and David Niven. Fairbanks, having just finished *When Thief Meets Thief* for Criterion Films, plays Rupert of Hentzau, and Massey takes the part of "Black Michael." It is the first American contract that either of these actors have accepted for some time; and after completing the job, Massey takes a play on Broadway and Fairbanks returns to England to make a film of the Scottish Border.

Infant Dept.

Stars may come and stars may go, but Shirley Temple films appear with phenomenal regularity. At the moment Miss Temple, who celebrated her eighth birthday last month, is working full pressure on *Wee Willie Winkie*, opposite he-man Victor McLaglen. The story is by Kipling.

There appears to be no lack of stories for child stars in London or Hollywood. Bonita Granville, villain child in *These Three* and *Maid of Salem*, has received a long term contract from Warners. Her first film is to be *The Story of Emil Zola*, followed by *The Love Derby*, with Leslie Howard and Olivia de Haviland. Freddie Bartholomew had no sooner finished his *Lloyds of London* for 20th Century-Fox than M.G.M. demanded him back for *Captain Courageous*, in which he co-stars for the second time with Mickey Rooney. Over at Beaconsfield, Hughie Green, Britain's seventeen-year-old star of radio, stage and screen, has signed a long-term contract with British Lion. His first film will be *Melody and Romance*, an original story played against a background of the B.B.C., Music Halls, and Hyde Park. Renée Houston is the leading lady, and Maurice Elvey the director. Dialogue by radio-playwright L. du Garde Peach.

MEETINGS AND ACQUAINTANCES

Kenneth Nyman

The election of **KENNETH NYMAN** to the vice-presidency of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association represents a real victory for the progressive elements in that body. In his late thirties, dry and unemotional, Nyman is the most able spokesman for the independent exhibitor. Past chairman of the London and Home Counties branch of the C.E.A. and an ex-teacher of science he brings an academic balance to the discussion of trade politics. His most valuable contribution has been on the subject of "overbuilding." It is safe to say that had he not raised his voice on the matter, the vital problem of the increasing domination of the circuits would never have figured in the discussions of the C.E.A. The C.E.A. has long been noted for its ability to take no positive line and it is only through the individual efforts of men like Nyman that matters of vital concern to exhibitors have been raised and ventilated. His long-sighted views have often made him the subject of bitter personal attacks from the old-fashioned members of the trade, but time and again he has been proved correct in his line. A classic example arose out of his continued advocacy of a statistical bureau which was viciously opposed and stifled on the grounds that it was not in the best interests of the exhibitor to reveal facts about his trade. The joker came when the C.E.A. had to present a case to the Lord Moyne Committee on Quota and failed to prove vital facts of its case through lack of statistics. Nyman contributed a notable paper to the recent conference on children's films and apart from trade activities has done much to encourage people engaged in the cultural and educational side of films. Here's hoping in his new capacity he will be able to wipe some of the cobwebs off the Exhibitors' Association.

* * *

GUNTHER VON STAPENHORST, until lately one of the leading Ufa producers under the Nazi régime and associate-producer of Britain's imperialist film epic, *The Great Barrier*, proposes to set up his own production unit in this country. Stapenhorst gained international recognition for his production of the anti-Russian propaganda film *Refugees*.

The industry has taken great pleasure in the apparent collapse of German film making under Hitler, but, as ever, can provide facilities for any Continental personality with a ready-made reputation. It will be interesting to see the exact results of Stapenhorst's work in this country. Is it possible that he will instil into his films an element of Anglo-German "understanding"?

* * *

Writing the script of *Action for Slander*, Saville's next picture, is **MILES MALLESON.** He is both an excellent actor and a brilliant writer. In the latter field he has recently distinguished himself with his *Six Men of Dorset*, a play dealing with the Tolpuddle Martyrs, which is being toured around the provinces prior to London production. Mr. Malleson is also to write the script of *Victoria* for Wilcox, starring Anna Neagle. The romance of the Queen and the Prince Consort can, he thinks, provide an excellent film-subject.

While attending to his play and his scripts, he was suddenly asked to play a part in *Knight without Armour*. Feyder directed him in the rôle of a villainous Bolshevist Commissar—an experience which he found stimulating. Looking however closely at Mr. Malleson, I failed to discover a trace of the blackguardly bolshevist, or even of the restless author.

* * *

SIR JOHN PAKENHAM, nearing eighty and a representative of the City of London, spoke at a recent London Cinema Luncheon Club meeting. This greying, dignified solicitor revealed to several hundred leading exhibitors that fifty years ago he was associated with Hale's Tours, the forerunner of the modern movie theatre and English counterpart of the "nickelodeon." They ran very early pictures like *The Great Train Robbery* and thrilled pre-war London with scenes of railway trains arriving at stations. They ran the first cinema in the City of London—a tradition that is carried on by the G.P.O. in Newgate Street. It was a surprise to hear this eminent pillar of the City talk of the early days, and there were very few exhibitors present who could recall them. "Jimmy" Bryson must have been one of Sir John's associates, but unfortunately he didn't enlarge on his memories.

* * *

CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD is on a short visit to England to supervise production on *The Ascent of F6*, written by himself and W. H. Auden.

Short and dark, with a large nose, Isherwood looks twenty-two, is actually in his thirties. In addition to his collaboration with Auden on new forms of drama, Isherwood is a novelist and wrote that scandalously brilliant study "Mr. Norris Changes Trains." He is at present completing a book which will be largely autobiographical.

He seldom visits England, preferring a nomadic continental life with settled periods in Belgium, France and Portugal. In pre-Nazi days he lived continuously in Germany.

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

Edited by H. E. Blyth

TALK OF THE DEVIL. (Carol Reed—British and Dominion.)
Ricardo Cortez, Sally Eilers, Basil Sidney, Randle Ayrton.

Talk of the Devil is a small picture as pictures go; not very expensive, not at all elaborate, with few sets, few players, no very big names in the cast. It is melodrama; big business melodrama with forgery and two suicides and attempted murder, and a hole in the floor to shoot the victim's body down into the river; real old Edgar Wallace stuff, with a dash of Lyceum, and the neatest thing in villainy by proxy since the late lamented *Frankenstein*. Apart from minor cavils, I got more pleasure out of *Talk of the Devil*, a richer sense of promise and fecundity, than out of any English melodrama since Hitchcock first made *The Lodger*. One can use all the adjectives in the dictionary about a film, describe it this way and that way, assess its direction and its writing and its acting and its presentation, but in the end there is only one question that matters—is it a dead picture or a live picture? Mr. Reed's is a live picture, and it is with the hope that he may give us many more live pictures in the future that I temper my congratulations to-day.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

One still hears the plaintive twittering of people who imagine that the British film industry is, artistically, a broken reed. Pull out your trumpet-stop on the mighty Wurlitzer! Darken the cinema! Spotlight on Carol Reed—unbroken, unbending—Britain's most portentous director since Hitchcock loomed exceptionally large over the horizon. *Talk of the Devil* has a nobility of central theme: it honours the Tynesiders who build ships. It is also a thriller—and a livid, baleful, malevolent thriller at that. It is also a love-story—and a tender, delicate, exquisitely witty love-story into the bargain. The story tells how John Findlay, head of a ship-building company, secretly secures the contract to build a new Atlantic liner that will bring back prosperity and employment to his men; how the secret leaks out, and the contract is cancelled; how John, disgraced, resigns from his company and commits suicide; how his adopted daughter and a young American force confession from the real culprit, clear the old man's name and avenge his suffering.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

Critical Summary.

TALK OF THE DEVIL. Astute critics long ago realised that Carol Reed was an English director to be watched. Early promise shown in his handling of *Midshipman Easy* bore fruit in the more ambitious *Laburnum Grove*. Now *Talk of the Devil* is generally acclaimed as a genuine thriller, excellently directed and showing marked originality. The trade also welcomes what is clearly first-rate entertainment.

THE WORM TURNS. (Walt Disney.)

The plot of *The Worm Turns* is peculiarly satisfying and sympathetic, for Mickey has invented a monstrous drug which gives invincible courage to those who take it, so that the fly routs the spider, the mouse the cat, the cat the dog, and the dog the man. The whole is as fast as any of Mr. Disney's works, and each animal when it takes the drug subtly combines its natural character with all the gestures of the bruiser.

—*The Times*

"We from Kronstadt"

Review of the Month

WE FROM KRONSTADT.

From the moment when the elderly commissar with a sad and unprofessional face, dressed in a shabby mackintosh and a soft hat which has known better days, takes his seat in the naval motor-boat which chugs softly out in the last evening light, under the bridges of Petrograd towards the lamps of the naval port, *We from Kronstadt* takes a firm hold on the imagination.

This story of 1919, the year of foreign intervention, up to the last shot of Balashov, the marine, standing on the cliff where his companions had been flung to death, shaking his fist towards the sea —"And now does anybody else want Petrograd?"—this very simple story of rivalry between the marines and the workers' battalions is in the tradition of boys' stories, full of last charges and fights to the death, heroic sacrifices and narrow escapes, all superbly directed: the single soldier crawling, grenade in hand, towards the monstrous tank which has terrified the marines; the ragged band in the last trench between the enemy and the capital striking up the cheerful rallying tune which calls the wounded from the dressing station to stagger back into a last desperate action; the voice whispering "Kronstadt, Kronstadt, Kronstadt" into the dumb phone as the camera tracks along the wire, the birds peacefully preening, to the ragged ends, the fallen post, and silence.

But magnificently as all this is done, what makes the picture remarkable is less the heroics than the lyrical, the poetic, the critical sense. This is what the poetic cinema should mean: not plays by Shakespeare adapted to a medium even less suitable than the modern stage; but poetry expressed in images, which let in a little more of common life than is in the story.

There are many examples of the poetic use of imagery and incident: the gulls sweeping and coursing above the cliffs where the Red prisoners are lined up for their death by drowning, the camera moving from the heavy rocks around their necks to the movement of the light white wings: one sooty tree drooping on the huge rocky Kronstadt walls above a bench where a sailor and a woman embrace; against the dark tide, the riding lights of the battleships, the shape of the great guns, the singing of a band of sailors going home in the dark to their iron home. Life as it is: life as it ought to be: Tchekov's definition of a novelist's purpose comes to mind. Every poetic image is chosen for its contrasting value, to represent peace and normal human values under the heroics and the war-time patriotism.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

W.F.N. SELECTION

The Good Earth	(stars reserved)
Theodora Goes Wild	* *
We from Kronstadt	* *
Fire over England	*
Talk of the Devil	*
Maid of Salem	*
After the Thin Man	*

OTHER FILMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

Head over Heels

Champagne Waltz

Pluck of the Irish

Song of the Road

The Worm Turns

The Eternal Mask

THE GOOD EARTH. (Sidney Franklin—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)
Paul Muni, Luise Rainer.

A vast and rich film has been made of Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth*. This "success" story of a Chinese farmer is not unlike the American classic story of poverty, toil, and eventual reward. The formal plot is outlined, though, with continual activity, with variety, and often with scenes of a great deal of beauty. It is a further indication of the skill in the general handling, for which Director Sidney Franklin must chiefly be thanked, that alien thoughts, superstitions, and customs are made so lucid. How correct these are I cannot say, but they have the style of authority, at least, and their presentation adds enormously to the charm of the picture. Naturally, the acting itself has much to do with the film's success; and it is the acting of Luise Rainer as O-Lan that is outstanding. That she hardly speaks throughout the performance, or makes a gesture, only serves to stress the fact that she actually dominates the film. She manages to seem more alive than whole mobs. The minor characters, down to the last Chinese infant, all help you think this may be the true North China. Altogether, *The Good Earth* gives us the China of famine, war, harvest, and, too, the China behind the screens.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

Once again Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has enriched the screen with a superb translation of a literary classic. Its film of Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth* is one of the finest things Hollywood has done this season or any other. The picture has an easy rhythm, graciously suited to Miss Buck's chronicle of the founding of the House of Wang Lung. If its pace is leisurely, it has the valid excuse of dealing with a quiet theme. If it lingers upon details, it is because they richly deserve attention. It is the commonplaces in the life of Wang Lung and O-Lan, his wife, rather than the high points, that fascinate us. Miss Buck's theme, of course, was the peasant's love for the land. It was that simple, unquestioning earth-worship which was the talisman of Wang the farmer. *The Good Earth* was the story of Wang's devotion to the land and the tragedy that threatened to overwhelm him when he neglected it, and the picture has chosen the best of Miss Buck's sequences. It invents a new climax, a terrifying locust plague which has been brilliantly photographed and provides a dramatic finale to a dramatic film. The picture does full justice to the novel, and that is the highest praise one can give it.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

Critical Summary.

THE GOOD EARTH. American critics unanimously accept this picture as one of the best, perhaps the best, of the late Irving Thalberg's productions. In the trade Muni probably does not rank as high as M.G.M.'s other more glamorous stars, and Luise Rainer is still something of an unknown quantity, but it should be noted that these two are the winners of the Academy awards for 1936. A considerable box-office success seems certain.

FIRE OVER ENGLAND. (William K. Howard—London Films.)
Laurence Olivier, Flora Robson, Leslie Banks, Vivien Leigh, Raymond Massey.

This is a superb film. It has excitement, humour and dignity. Better dialogue has never been spoken on the screen. The great Armada, it is true, rather looked like a battle between walnut-shells in a bath, and Sir Francis Drake was presumably too busy playing bowls to put in an appearance throughout the entire film; but everything else was magnificent. I think the painting of Queen Elizabeth has been too faithfully copied; art and actuality need not be bedmates. Flora Robson showed Elizabeth as an avaricious, jealous, malevolent woman; yet one pitied her, and admired her for the fire of patriotism that burnt within her. She had courage, and if she demanded service she was herself the servant of her country. Apart from its historical background, the story is an exciting one. This is a film to see, and see again; and to remember for years. —Harris Deans, *The Sunday Graphic*

There is no lack of incident in A. E. W. Mason's story, but the flowers of narrative are almost throttled by gross weeds of irrelevant detail. *Fire over England* is not a character study of Queen Elizabeth. These laborious pictures of her idiosyncrasies side-track us from the main business of the plot. Though the verdict is unfavourable, it is necessary to add a recommendation to mercy. For when the story of *Fire over England* takes control over the actors we are treated to vigorous and spectacular action in the manner of the early Douglas Fairbanks films. The escapes, the duels and sea-battles are well done. *Fire over England* has the virtues and defects of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. In that Korda production, too, a foolproof story almost met its match, but nevertheless survived by native strength the blows of irrelevancy. Efforts to gild the lily have nearly killed *Fire over England*, but after each long period of unconsciousness it comes magnificently to life again. —*Truth*

Critical Summary.

FIRE OVER ENGLAND. A mixed reception from the critics, all of whom praised the spirit in which the film was conceived but not all of whom were satisfied with the final treatment. We may doubt the wisdom of so many English costume films, but in the trade, where hope springs eternal, prosperity and another *Private Life of Henry VIII* are just around the corner.

"The Good Earth"

Review of Reviews (continued)

Myrna Loy in "After the Thin Man"

AFTER THE THIN MAN. (W. S. Van Dyke—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)
William Powell, Myrna Loy, Joseph Calleia, Elissa Landi, James Stewart.

As few people ever write or make pictures with any deep regard for their work, it is even rarer to find a warm, gay and charming movie than it is to discover plays of that nature; there is so much money, so much exaggerated excitement, so many little heroes connected with motion picture production; it is more often by accident than by design that you run across a spontaneous bit of writing or acting in a movie. *The Thin Man* was that rare exception, a spontaneous movie made by design, and the producers were taking a chance when they attempted to make a sequel. Thus I am happy to report that, while it will not be as fresh as the original Dashiell Hammett production, *After the Thin Man* is a very successful sequel. The picture opens very slowly and more or less seeks to introduce again the idyllic married life of Mr. and Mrs. Nick Charles and their wire-hair, Asta. However, the sets, the photography and the staging in these first few scenes are superb, if overdone. Then one of Mr. Hammett's charming characters, a blackmailing ne'er do well, is murdered, and Mr. Powell and Miss Loy are off to the races again. As is true of practically everything Mr. Hammett writes, the plot is perfectly cock-eyed: as it is true also, it doesn't make any difference because his characters are so brilliantly and gaily drawn. —Pare Lorentz, *McCall's*

Nobody will be quite as happy about *After the Thin Man* as we all were about *The Thin Man*. Nick and Nora are back with us again, and again played by William Powell and Myrna Loy. W. S. Van Dyke has directed it, and everything should have been just fine, but something of the old bloom is gone. Not that as pictures go in this great world this is a dud film. Only in comparison with its predecessor does it disappoint you. There's plenty of shooting, and there's so much "mystery" that I finally lost track of things altogether and didn't know what had happened, or why people went on the way they did. I didn't guess the solution of the mystery, either.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

Critical Summary.

AFTER THE THIN MAN. Precisely. It should have been before to merit its just reward.

THEODORA GOES WILD. (Richard Boleslawski—Columbia.)
Irene Dunne, Melvyn Douglas.

The story is adroitly told. It is a satirical comment upon the petty-mindedness of a small town community. We have all the smug respectability, the scandal-mongering, the humorous situations of this atmosphere. We listen to bright and sparkling dialogue with an appreciable sprinkling of sentiment. Dramatic purpose informs the whole. And if you have the slightest feeling of disappointment, it will not be because of Irene Dunne. We see her as the equal of any of our screen comediennes. Observe the skill with which she handles the complexities, the varied expressions, the individuality of her character. This is a grand piece of acting. Such consummate artistry is as uncommon as it is disturbing.

—Sydney W. Carroll, *The Sunday Times*

Miss Irene Dunne will be remembered for many patient, womanly and rather smug performances (*Roberta* and *Magnificent Obsession* are the worst cases on record); now she has been re-groomed and appears as one of the best comediennes on the screen in the best light comedy since *Mr. Deeds*.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

Critical Summary.

THEODORA GOES WILD. General satisfaction expressed that Irene Dunne has reversed the normal mental process of the Hollywood star, who plays slick modern comedy parts admirably but yearns for heavy dramatic rôles, and has brilliantly turned from suffering to farce. Menjou has also done it with marked success. Peter Lorre might follow suit.

PLUCK OF THE IRISH. (John G. Blystone—Grand National. Titled *Great Guy* in America.)
James Cagney, Mae Clarke, Edward Brophy.

Mr. James Cagney's first picture since his battle with Warner Brothers has appeared. It is common gossip in movie circles that the industry is out to "break Cagney," not only because he put up a terrific court battle on his salary question, but because he, like President Roosevelt, is what California calls "a red." Mr. Cagney tipped his hand several years ago when, along with such communists as the judge who sentenced Tom Mooney, he joined in the movement toward getting Mr. Mooney a new trial. To speak up for Tom Mooney is enough for Hollywood. The movie-makers let each other understand that anyone who could beat them in court was a dangerous red. *Pluck of the Irish* is Cagney's first picture with the new company, and his first picture since "the trouble." In theme, *Pluck of the Irish* is worthy and even a little more honest than the run of racketeer-exposure films. Cagney himself is as good as ever, and in general the film is not bad. It simply smacks of a second-rate studio. Mr. Cagney does not deserve this, and his public should be indignant that movie politics has put him into such a position. —Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

Cagney's rôle is that of an inspector of weights and measures, who finds the scales of justice faked as well as those of the grocer. His girl is secretary to one of the town's most eminent and respected crooks; but that doesn't make any difference. I still say that gangster stories, especially when they are as polite as this one, are refreshing and highly moral. James refusing to be bribed is a fine, uplifting sight; his defiance of a corrupt municipality is heartening; and his willingness to take the gloves off on occasion is exciting. One of these days we may see on the screen an American town honestly run; but this would probably be terribly dull.

—P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

SONG OF THE ROAD. (John Baxter—U.K. Films.)
Bransby Williams, Tod Slaughter, Davy Burnaby, Percy Parsons, Peggy Novak.

This is a leisurely, spacious and quietly appealing film "all along of an old grey mare." The mare is Polly, turned off London's streets to make way for progress, to whom Bill, her driver, is bound by ties he cannot sunder. So he sinks his savings in her at the auction sale, takes her with the harness that his pals present as a parting gift, and seeks a happy-go-lucky destiny in the Sussex Downs. There is a meeting with a tinker who has the spirit of Borrow's Petulengro, an interlude with the show business which is uncommonly authentic in atmosphere, and a sojourn in a farm where man and horse are literally and figuratively in clover for a time. There is something wrong with exhibitors' mentality if this film does not book well. It is one to see yourself, and one to take the children to see, a human film, and not a bit smart. Clean, fresh gusts of laughter blow through it, straight from the English countryside —whence laughter and the joy of living still proceed, even though, as Bill and Polly discover, they are now making munitions there.

—*Birmingham Mail*

Review of Reviews (continued)

CHAMPAGNE WALTZ. (A. Edward Sutherland —Paramount.)
Gladys Swarthout, Fred MacMurray, Jack Oakie.

Paramount's jubilee number is a bright, brittle trifle, with a dash of nearly everything in the light entertainment line. Its basic idea is the same as that of Disney's *Music-Land*, where, you will remember, it was love that built a bridge of harmony between the Isle of Jazz and the Isle of Symphony. It is not quite symphony here, only sentimental Strauss, with a dash of Saint-Saens, but the whole thing is handled so as to please both those who like their music sweet and those who like it hot, and there is just enough satirical camera comment to get either lot by with foes as well as friends. The tale opens in Vienna, where two descendants of the Strauss family, a girl and her grandfather, kept the old tradition alive in their Waltz Palace. In the end we find the Strausses playing in New York in a Ziegfeld setting that is a thousand times more vulgar than all the honest-to-goodness jazz they had spurned in Vienna.

—Frank Evans, *Newcastle Evening Chronicle*

Jazz band versus Strauss waltzers. The final scene, in which the two bands literally merge, is the funniest piece of Hollywood's unconscious self-satire ever filmed.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

THE ETERNAL MASK. (Werner Hochbaum—Swiss.)
Peter Petersen, Mathias Wieman, Olga Chechova, Tom Kraa.

It is so seldom that the cinema casts aside its romantic clichés for its proper mantle as an individual art form that this Swiss picture catches us with our guard down and our critical vocabulary rusted. Ordinary superlatives would be ridiculous, comparisons are impossible and that invidious epithet "unique" would not do justice to the occasion. *The Eternal Mask* is a case history of psychosis. It is the story of Dr. Dumartin, member of the staff of a Basle hospital, who administers his experimental meningitis serum to a hopeless case in defiance of the hospital superintendent's order and loses his mind when the patient dies. Excoriated by the widow and unable to bear the accusing glances of his colleagues, the nurses and the other patients, he attempts suicide. Rescued, he loses all sense of his own identity, but is obsessed with the idea of finding Dumartin who—he fancies—is being held prisoner somewhere below, to warn him against murdering others with his serum. Thereafter the film is a record of the dream-world meanderings of a disordered brain while the hospital's staff seeks the key to Dumartin's subconscious mind. Those responsible have collaborated perfectly in fusing the real and the unreal elements of the drama into a coherent and completely engrossing motion picture; the modern score, played by the Vienna Philharmonic Society, is the most eloquent accompaniment imaginable, and the performances are uniformly admirable.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

MAID OF SALEM. (Frank Lloyd—Paramount.)
Claudette Colbert, Fred MacMurray, Bonita Granville, Gale Sondergaad.

The little Puritan community, with its house-raisings, its church services with the women carefully segregated from the men lest lustful thoughts should be engendered by propinquity, its bans on dancing and whistling, and even laughing, has been re-created on the screen in all its bleak bigotry but without perceptible exaggeration; and the way the blood-lust starts and spreads is only too horribly familiar. *Maid of Salem* is picturesque, exciting entertainment, brilliantly acted by Miss Colbert and a very powerful cast. If there is any other young actress on the screen who combines Miss Colbert's graces and talents—for comedy, romantic tenderness and tearing drama —she hasn't come this way.

—George Campbell, *The Bystander*

Claudette Colbert, every movement of her eloquent eyes, her tender mouth, her expressive hands, conveying an appealing lovableness, is placed upon trial for witchcraft. Her spirit is torn by the revelation that her mother, in England, was burnt at the stake as a convicted witch. The fugitive rebel who could prove that her secret conversations have been with a dashing lover, and not with the devil, has disappeared. This culminating situation, built up with searching poignancy, is not quite the end. If it were, given the personality of Miss Colbert, we might have had the most harrowing performance since Sybil Thorndike played St. Joan.

—A. T. Borthwick, *The News Chronicle*

Critical Summary.

MAID OF SALEM. Press and Trade opinions vary. Claudette Colbert is one of the most talented and popular stars on the screen (eighth in the *Motion Picture Herald's* annual box-office poll), but many doubt the wisdom of starring her in this rather sombre and cheerless story. But the critics, if not the trade, can applaud Frank Lloyd for his integrity of purpose and his refusal to weaken the effect by concessions to popular appeal.

HEAD OVER HEELS. (Sonnie Hale—Gaumont-British.)
Jessie Matthews, Louis Borell, Robert Flemyng.

I enjoyed this more than any other Jessie Matthews film. Why? Because it has none of those great senseless spectacles with gyrating chorus girls; it does not attempt to make Jessie Matthews a glamour queen glittering in sequins, but allows her to be a normal, charming girl; it has good songs, lyrics and dialogue; and the star has supporting players who contribute something to the entertainment for themselves. Jessie is a cabaret girl who falls for a handsome, conceited young man (Louis Borell), while young faithful, in the shape of Robert Flemyng, hangs around until the last reel before she realises where her heart lies.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

The presence of the osier-bodied Jessie Matthews should be enough to underwrite any film, and though this truism may unduly predispose the Matthews clientele in favour of *Head Over Heels in Love*, it is one that bears repeating. Miss Matthews is the most graceful of all the girl dancers, a shape of infinite lightness which yields itself to every passing breeze and stray impulse of rhythm as naturally as a flower, but in this case, alas, the restrictions of plot permit her to dance too little, and no possible plot—this one, least of all—could be worth such a sacrifice. The film itself, marred in spots by tactless lighting, point-blank camera technique and similar Briticisms, nevertheless contrives to muddle imperially through to its conclusion.

Jessie Matthews in "Head over Heels"

—B. R. C., *The New York Times*

Critical Summary.

HEAD OVER HEELS. "If anything fails in London these days it must be superlative phewy," wrote George Jean Nathan recently. In other words, English and American critics are seldom able to agree on what constitutes a good play, or more especially on what constitutes a good plot. But in Jessie Matthews they seem to have found a sort of common denominator on which they can agree. This department has always been a little intrigued by the influence she exerts over all and sundry.

1902 Les Sept Châteaux du Diable

Early Days

Part II

Miss Seton continues her analysis of the cinema's early days which began in "W.F.N.'s" January issue

A MONTH after the Lumière films were first exhibited commercially in England on February 20th, 1896, at the Polytechnic Theatre, an Englishman, Robert W. Paul, was engaged by the Alhambra to show his own series of moving pictures which were called the Animatograph. Though the Lumière's are responsible for the first films, Paul has to his credit the making of the first "topical"—the Derby of 1896—as well as the first love-story, the 80-ft. film *The Soldier's Courtship*. Soon after the public appearance of the films of Lumière and Paul there came on the scene David Devant, of Maskelyne's Theatre. The first American company which bore his name presented a performance of animated pictures in a small hall of the Queen's Hall, during the intervals of the Promenade Concerts, conducted by Sir (then Mr.) Henry J. Wood.

Meanwhile in America the scientist Edison was improving his slot-machine-film-projector, the Kinetoscope, which had caused considerable interest at the Chicago World Fair in '93. He built a studio costing the fabulous sum of £20,000. The second American company to be formed was the Muroscope. This company, which was the originator of the spectacular film, created a sensation in 1897 by producing the first three-reeler. It was the Salmi Morse version of the *Passion Play*, and £3,200 was spent on preliminaries alone. In 1903 Erwin S. Porter's *Great Train Robbery* appeared, the father of all the Westerns.

Returning to Paris, Georges Méliès, a director of a theatre of magic, realised that the cinema possessed unlimited possibilities in the realm of the fantastic. He bought film from Kodak and projectors from Paul in order to make a 360-ft. picture of *Cinderella*. Whether Méliès' version of *Cinderella* was shown in England one cannot be certain, but Mr. Andrew Block has an interesting programme of a film of that name which was shown at Hastings during Whit-week 1900. The Hastings picture featured an actress, Dorothy Castella. One wonders if this Miss Castella was the first screen actress to be publicised as a "star." During the early years of cinema Méliès, Robert Paul and James A. Williamson invented every imaginable technical trick. Such processes as "stop-motion" and "double-printing' were to be seen in every other film. Not only was Méliès the inventor of "trick cinema," but he was also the father of the *March of Time*. He reconstructed a film of the notorious Dreyfus Case, and also one of the Coronation of Edward VII from official documents.

For several years after the invention of moving pictures, their status was that of a "turn" lasting from fifteen to thirty-five minutes in the programmes of music hall and vaudeville theatres; or as a new side-show on the fair-grounds. At that time pictures were sent on appro. and distributed by appointed "commercial travellers." The second stage in the development of film distribution came when shops were rigged up by enterprising tradesmen for the showing of a programme of short pictures. Price of admission was the modest sum of a nickel in America and 2½*d.* in England.

The picture palace as a special building did not make its appearance until 1908: then buildings of every description, from derelict factories to congregational chapels, were bought up by companies who saw that a boom was on the way. The slogan of the day became "Perfection in Projection." The first picture to put cinema on the way to becoming the fifth industry in America, was the Italian film *Quo Vadis*? of 1913 The exclusive rights of this picture were bought by a shrewd American showman, Charles Kleine, who toured it throughout America. Within twelve months it is said that he made more than £100,000 profit.

In order to supply the increasing demand for films, the few people who made them in the early days were kept exceedingly busy. Between 1896 and 1900, Paul and Williamson were supplying the American market with anything from sixty to eighty films a week. Their pictures also found a market in Germany. Naturally there was a great deal of pirating, and in order to avoid this, Mr. Cecil Hepworth, whose studio at Walton-on-Thames was established in 1899, had a trade-mark—a wooden board with the name of his company on it—visible in every shot.

Hepworth sponsored the first British stars. By 1907 he was making a series of pictures with Chrissie White, then 11 years old, and the dancer Unity Moore. A little later Alma Taylor appeared. In those early days the film business was considered a very lucrative profession for the minimum pay was 4*s.* a day; while the "leads" were paid as much as one or two guineas. Moreover it was regular work so long as the rain kept off! By 1912 movie magnates in America were thinking of "putting actors over big." Adolph Zukor and Daniel Frohman put their heads together in order to decide which actor would be the biggest box-office draw in the world. They decided in favour of Sarah Bernhardt and subsequently bought the rights of her French film *Queen Elizabeth*. From then on stars became all-important. But as Bernhardts were few and far between there was only one thing to do—to make one's own. Hence Zukor formed the company Famous Players and created the "World's Sweetheart," Mary Pickford, who, in October, 1912, received the colossal salary of £100 a week. Previously she had made a number of short films under D. W. Griffiths for the Biograph Company.

Although the cinema was considered fit entertainment only for nursemaids and riff-raff before the war, it had artistic leanings from the outset and literature played an important part in its development. Shakespeare was put through innumerable screen tests before 1914. Dickens was popular: *Oliver Twist* (with the American stage star Nat Goodwin), *Tale of Two Cities* (a Vitagraph production of 1910, costing £3 000), *Xmas Carol*, *Barnaby Rudge* and *David Copperfield* had all been seen before 1912. Dumas was immediately recognised as an

1902 Ballet Apothéose. Les Sept Châteaux du Diable

of the Movie

by Marie Seton

This is the first time that a detailed study of pre-war movie history has been published

author with suitable romantic verve for the cinema. The first *Monte Cristo* film was made in America by the Selig company in 1912. But four years earlier, 1908, the Italian company Cines Società of Rome produced an ambitious picture of *The Three Musketeers*; while a second version of this book was made in Paris by the company Film d'Art.

The French version cost £18,000 and was played by an all-star cast drawn from the leading theatres of Paris. To return to Italy. Cines Società of Rome specialised in spectacular films of ancient history. The first to attract attention was *The Fall of Troy*, in which 800 people took part. This was followed by a 1,460 ft. production of *Macbeth* which cost £10,000, a film of Tasso's poem on the crusades and a picture of *Faust*. But the high spot was reached in Italy with the production of Gabriel d'Annunzio's play *Cabiria*, upon which £50,000 was spent. All these films were made between 1907 and 1914.

Two other countries to utilise the novel were Denmark and Russia. Gerhardt Hauptman collaborated with the then important company, Nordisk Films of Copenhagen, when they made a film of his novel *Atlantis*. Judging from records of the making of this film it is one of the rare occasions when a story was adapted for the screen in accordance with the author's ideas. In Russia the novels and stories of Pushkin, Gogol and Tolstoy were the chief material of the pre-war Russian cinema which gained a reputation in Europe during 1912 and 1913. Among the sensations of those years were the extraordinary *Beetle* films made in Russia by Professor Loshki in 1912. Two of these films, *The Beetle's Deception* and *Aviation Week*, have recently been unearthed in a junk-shop, and the former shown at the London Film Society. The method employed in making them is still doubtful. There are three possibilities:—that the beetles are models, that they are dead beetles animated, and thirdly, they may be live beetles performing. In each case the beetles are characters in stories of a type usually associated with French farce.

"Trick Films" had a considerable vogue before 1914. Animated clay, wooden dolls and designs made with matches coming into fashion in turn. In 1907 the first cartoons were made in France by Emil Cohl. Three or four years later, experiments were made in England by Mr. C. Armstrong; while cartoons pasted on to articulated cardboard figures were made in Germany. Germany also produced in 1913 the first version of *The Student of Prague*. In 1913 the American cartoons of Harry Mayer became a regular feature in the cinema. Gradually cartoons superseded other forms of "trick films."

Almost every idea that has developed in the cinema since 1914 existed in some form or another before the war. Even sound and colour occupied a place in the cinema from the beginning. As soon as Edison had invented his Kinetoscope he wished to combine animation with sound. Consequently he devised a machine on the coin-in-the-slot principle which was called the Kinetograph. This machine was installed in cigar-shops and on railway stations, but it did not advance far enough to find its way into the motion picture studio. In Europe an attempt at sound reached the public in 1908. It was the Cinephone and it was simply the coupling of a gramophone record to the projector; the records for the sound being completed first and the images then synchronised to them. The cost of a 1,000 ft. Cinephone film was in the region of £26 10*s*. 10*d*.

The next method was the Vivaphone, introduced by the Hepworth film company, who made three Vivaphone pictures each week. The subject of these talking and singing pictures was generally a direct transference of the music-hall "turn" to the screen. Meanwhile, as far back as 1902 in France, Leon Gaumont invented a means of simultaneous reproduction of sound and motion. His invention, known as the Chronophone, was introduced to the French Photographic Society on November 7th, 1902, but it was not until December, 1910, that Gaumont felt it had advanced sufficiently to be demonstrated publicly to the French Academy of Science.

Colour was also in some people's minds. The first coloured films were hand-tinted and experiments in this method were made by Robert Paul in the late 'nineties. The colouring of the 7,000 ft. film of *The Miracle* was the greatest achievement of this laborious method, for each colourist could only complete eight feet of film daily. The first decisive step in the development of a mechanical means of colouring was made by the photographer Friese Green. He invented a three-colour process by taking pictures successively through red, green and violet filters and projecting them through similarly coloured screens. The results of this process were exhibited to the Royal Photographic Society in 1900. Numbers of other experiments followed, but were never commercialised. Nevertheless these early endeavours are the basis of the later two-colour systems. Another process was that of Albert Smith. Patented in 1906 it was finally introduced to the public in 1908 under the name of Kinemacolour. Kinemacolour's greatest triumph was the Durbar film of 1912.

After the appearance of Kinemacolour, coloured films became a common occurrence. They were usually travelogues similar to the Fitzpatrick's of to-day, or else historical films; the latter were particularly popular in France when Pathé and Gaumont were growing concerns. At that time—just prior to the war—France, Italy, Denmark, America and England were in comparatively equal competition. There was no suggestion that continental films were more highbrow than those of America and England and, therefore, less commercial. Profits were important to all parties, but profitable distribution was open to all countries.

And then came the War. For a short time movie magnates thought more of patriotic propaganda than of their profits.

NEWSREEL RUSHES

by

The Commentator

Gaumont-British Newsreel men

Another Wardour Street crisis has come and gone like a shower in April—soaking the British Film World in gloom for a day, but soon drying off again. The immediate effect of the Gaumont British "New Deal" on the newsreel world is slight, but it leaves piquant possibilities for the future. Mr. C. M. Woolf's giant selling organisation "General Film Distributors" now finds itself in the possibly embarrassing position of having two newsreels to offer to cinema managers. For it already owns Universal, and now it is to distribute the G.B. News also.

There is no precedent for such a situation in the film industry; for while many department stores sell several brands of ladies' silk stockings and leave it to the customers to choose the brand they prefer, film salesman's patter has been for years based entirely on combining references to their reel as "the world's one and only," with vitriolic talk about all their opponents. If Mr. Woolf eventually finds serving in two shops too difficult for him, he has it within his power to close down Universal completely. Or he may sell out, and then anything may happen.

* * * *

With Michael Balcon looking for fresh fields to till with American ploughs, and M.G.M. distributing a new reel in America (see below), the rumour seems hardly fantastically far-fetched, that an American organisation might conceivably jump at the chance of turning the Universal Talking News into the Universal Sound News—a suggestion that implies no criticism of commentator Jeffrey, who does a good job in his own style. But most competent observers feel that the time has come when Universal can no longer maintain their policy of "manufacturing" all their sound in the studio, of making a drum-beat do for the crash of a giant gun, and a toy whistle imitate the whine of a shell, of offering the public virtually a silent reel with a commentary.

* * * *

American Newsreel troubles. Considering America's press freedom, the story of a U.S. newsreel getting into political hot water seems almost unbelievable. In 1918, U.S. newsemperor William Randolph Hearst owned a newsreel "Hearst-Pathé." When its owner was accused of pro-German bias, he dropped his name out of his reel, changed the title to the "International Newsreel." In 1930, when the times seemed less stormy, Hearst brought his name back again, called the reel the "Hearst Metrotone News." But during the last Presidential election, Hearst became so unpopular for his personal vendetta against Franklin D. Roosevelt, that cinemaddicts who objected to the Hearst policy took to booing the Hearst newsreel, even boycotting cinemas where it was shown.

For the second time the Hearst name was hastily erased, to be kept out until election fever should drop to normal again. But even the name Metrotone had become associated in the public mind with the hated enemy of Roosevelt. So the reel was eventually completely extinguished, and there came to life in its place "News of the Day," with radio commentator Jean Paul King, and distributed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. The new reel has no obvious contact with Hearst, but newsmen think that he plays exactly the same role in the new set-up as he did in the old. As yet "News of the Day" has no official connection with any British reel for European Coverage; a fact that may be the cause of M.G.M. interest in acquiring control of a British reel (see above).

The Academy special award given to the *March of Time* bears the following inscription: "For its significance to motion pictures, and for having revolutionised one of the most important branches of the industry. Its creativeness is looked upon by the Academy as a shot in the arm for the whole newsreel field."

The committee is headed by Frank Capra, Academy president. They make a special award each year.

Previous special awards were: two, in 1928, to Warners for producing *Jazz Singer*, first all-sound picture, and to Charlie Chaplin for his versatility in writing, acting, directing and producing *The Circus;* to Walter Disney (1934) for creating Mickey Mouse; to Shirley Temple (1935) a half-size statue for her contribution to screen entertainment; and to David Wark Griffith (1936) for distinguished creative achievements.

* * * *

Before granting permission to the newsreel companies to film the Coronation, it was clearly established that all reels must be censored by Dr. Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury. Together with Earl Marshal the Duke of Norfolk, he will have a free hand in eliminating anything he considers unsuitable for general showing throughout the country.

Runners are to be used to transport the reels to the laboratories, and from there to the censorship theatre, so that those who find it impossible to see the procession will see it in the cinemas only a few hours later. But whichever company gets there first, Movietone remains ahead with its exclusive rights to film in Technicolor (weather permitting). Six colour cameras are to be used, mounted on platforms to permit shooting over the crowd. They are also to have one colour and two black and white cameras on the roof of Westminster Hospital, to obtain pictures of the royal party entering and leaving the Abbey. Six seat spaces have been purchased at £50 each.

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A Remarkable Film

by

LOUISE WATT

AND SO TO WORK, a new short distributed by Kinograph, unobtrusively slipped into the programmes of several news theatres this month. So brilliant is this two-reeler and so much above the usual comedy of the same length that it has brought immediate recognition to its creator, Richard Massingham.

But this name on the credit titles conveyed nothing to the film industry. Nobody had heard of Richard Massingham, nobody knew with which company he was connected. But *World Film News*, determined to introduce him personally to the public, eventually tracked him down to a most unexpected spot, the London Fever Hospital in Islington. Here we met Dr. Massingham, Resident Medical Officer, a large, good-natured looking person with a grin that explained at once his ability for getting the maximum of humour out of an ordinary situation.

Dr. Richard Massingham

With *And So to Work* Massingham has brought to the screen a record of one of the most primitive periods of present-day society —the struggle for existence between 8.15 and 9 a.m. in any boarding-house. It follows the misadventures of a young man during that dreadful three-quarters of an hour with a shrewdness of observance that is devastating. Nothing is missed. The struggle to get up, the final awful determination, the somnambulant first tour of the room in search of dressing-gown and slippers, the fearful calamity of blunt razor and gashed face, the whistler in the bathroom and the costive in the lavatory, the lost laundry, the eaten toast and sticky marmalade jar, all are screened with an ease and understatement that make the film a gem of comedy. It has the glorious effect of giving you a spyhole through which you affectionately watch someone being supremely natural. Never does an action or gesture suggest rehearsals or direction. The spontaneity of the film places it in the true comedy tradition.

Richard Massingham, who qualified at University College Hospital thirteen years ago, experimented originally with a 16 mm. camera. But in 1934, with his first real shooting-script worked out, he bought an ancient hand-turned Newman Sinclair with one lens, a 2″. With a 6″ adapted from a still camera, and six 500-watt lamps, the film was completed in nine months. It was called *Tell Me if it Hurts?* and was the story of a broken tooth and a visit to the dentist. Shooting was done every Sunday in Massingham's own dentist's surgery, and the sound was recorded afterwards at Imperial Sound Studios. Russell Waters, then a student at the Old Vic, and now a leading-part player on tour, was the central character in both films. *Tell Me if it Hurts?* which has not yet reached the cinemas, shows the same biting observancy as *And So to Work*. The incidents are as commonplace and as funny, the direction and acting as unobtrusive and as powerful. It is, perhaps, a trifle too long but Massingham plans to re-cut and shorten it so that he can get distribution and enough money to make another.

Massingham's expenses, compared with the studio two-reeler, are almost negligible. No lavish sets are required. He made *And So to Work* in his own hospital quarters when off duty. No stars needed, no laboriously built-up gags, no conventionally farcical situations to get laughs. Massingham's humour is analytic and his dissection of ordinary people doing ordinary things brings a breath of fresh air to a cinema public tired of redundant and unfunny comedies.

Not only has Massingham shown that high-powered equipment, high-powered stars, and high-powered overheads are the least guarantee of a good film but he has again proved that it is the real people who are the best screen material. That stage situations, theatre acting, and vaudeville jokes cannot be lifted bodily from one medium to another and remain potent. Richard Massingham must be thanked as well for his object lesson to the film industry as for his two first-class contributions to cinema.

And So to Work

On Rising

On taking the Waters

On Bathing

On Losing One's Collar Stud

"What this country needs is more marriages, more homes and a bonus for every baby."—*Mae West.*

"I'm really a singing vagabond at heart."—*Nelson Eddy.*

"I fall madly in love with my leading men—only during the making of a picture."—*Marlene Dietrich.*

"I read nothing but classical and historical biographies."—*Bobby Breen.*

"Woolf! Woolf!"—*A British Film Tycoon.*

IT'S THE GYPSY IN THEM

Thumbing through a bundle of publicity material that had found its way, delicately scented, to my desk, I came across the following little gem of information:

> "In order to avoid being disturbed, they (the directors of a large chain of cinemas) take a seven-seater Daimler and drive into the Park. Here they hold their meetings complete with Shorthand Typist and Secretary."

Sometimes, if you are unlucky, you may catch a glimpse of the Daimler drawn in among the trees while the directors hold noisy revelry in a bosky glade and twine vine-leaves in the greasy hair of the typist, and reporters dressed as fauns and satyrs dance among them, trying to get a glance at the shorthand notes, stained now with champagne and tomato sandwiches.

As dusk falls, the great car bears its human freight homewards, tired but happy; now pausing to allow the Chairman to leer at an old woman selling matches, now gathering speed as a dissenting director is thrown out on his great fleshy ear.

Other instances of bizarre board-meetings have been supplied to me by my staff of stooges. It is not generally known, for instance, that *Punk Pictures* hold their meetings on a roundabout on Hampstead Heath, because the directors just *love* going round in circles. The board of *Filthfilms* meets in a disused refuse-barge at Chiswick; while a special cell is set aside at Dartmoor for the directors of *Phoneyfilms*, all of whom by a happy chance are down at this popular Devon retreat together.

Turning from Mr. Coward's photograph to the title page, one gazes at the title, "Present Indicative," and asks oneself, 'Indicative of what?' Mr. Coward has plenty of time in which to discover this. —*St. John Irvine*

Once round the critics and back in time for tea

C. A. Lejeune
Has a lot to leune.

Paul Holt
Has only one folt.
He likes to pan
As much as he can.

It is not within the province of this organ
To guy Morgan.

Jympson Harman
Is rather charman.

Pat Mannock
Never gets into a pannock.

Stephen Watts
Is full of *bon motts.*

Reg. Whitley
Writes pritley.

Richard Haestier
Makes many a nice gaestier.

Ian Coster
Is next on the roster.
He is a menace
At tenace.

Campbell Dixon
Is never caught mixon
His metaphors
As we do ors.

Beastly Biographies No. 1

MIASMA DEL MONTI

Born in Russia in 1845, she became a steppe-dancer at the Imperial Ballet in Snakba. Getting the Imperial Bullet from the Imperial Ballet, she fled to England to escape the Revolution. The Revolution did not follow.

After wide stage experience (anything but a wide stage being much too narrow) she stowed away in a cattle-boat to California and was never noticed except by the cattle. Made her debut in pictures as a midwife in *The Birth of a Nation.* Played the name part in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and one of the hindparts in *The Four Horsemen.*

Her films include *Scratch My Back, Oh, No, You Don't, I Wasn't Talking to You, Let's Change the Subject, How's Your Father?* Hobbies: bird's nesting, baseball and insulting bus-conductors. Colour of eyes: muddy. Complexion (and everything else): ruddy.

Mask Me Another

She wears a special rubberised make-up mask that covers her entire face, merely accentuating her best features and smoothing over the others.—American Fan Magazine.

There won't be no shooting to-day, boys,
You're spared from your onerous task,
Miss Lulu La Salle
(Such a madcap, that gal),
Has forgotten her rubberised mask.
It seems it was hung out to dry, boys,
And the garbage-man took it away;
Without it her pan's
Hardly fit for the fans,
So there won't be no shooting to-day,
Hey, hey,
There won't be no shooting to-day.

DAVE ROBSON SAYS:

Physical jerks to the accompaniment of music from the films might well be the cinema's contribution to the nation's "get fit" appeal now being launched.

Leg theory in the cinematic sense has but one real interpretation—and that is expressed in bare legs, thigh high. Figures are not even viewed as mere numerals, to the cinemagoer, who finds physical figures more alluring—more exhilarating.

Physiologic deduction therefore decrees that the shapely forms of the fair sex, as seen from the screen tripping out a light fantastic to the rhythm of a popular fox-trot, will have more effect than Sir Kingsley's oratorical, national anthem. Not much room, it's true, to do contortionist tricks in between rows of tip-up seats, but judging from the acrobatics performed by mating couples in cinemas, I am sure that such exercise will give colour to the Birth of a new and better Nation, of which the cinema and Sir Kingsley will have just reason to be proud.

Now, sir!

Miss Dietrich may be gorgeous
In filmy crepe-de-chine,
When playing one of the Borgias
Or the Empress Josephine;
Miss Dietrich may be glamorous
As lovely Helen of Troy,
At times, superbly amorous,
At others, gay and coy—
But the verdict of her cutter
Would take her down a peg,
For to him she's bread and butter
And strips of pos. and neg.

G. BRYANT

...ALORUM

by Rodney Hobson

Salade Russe

You want to produce a film. Good. I will help you. First you must think of a subject. There are three methods: (*a*) See a successful play. Buy it. If the actors are successful, buy them too. If you haven't got any money I will lend it to you. (*b*) Fill one of Mr. Korda's hats with historical names (except Mr. Arliss). Take a pick. Buy a professor and a Hungarian writer. (*c*) Buy a very well-known actress and leave it to back-projection. This is known as the Salade Russe method.

Now you will want to buy a director. There are hundreds of directors waiting to direct your picture. If you have chosen an Irish subject, choose a Russian director. If you have a Russian subject choose a German director. If you have an English subject leave it alone.

You have bought your director. Good. Now buy a studio. You have a very artistic temperament (mem. have it photographed), therefore you will want a studio far out in the country in the middle of a deer park, with a castle. There must be a moat around the castle. The moat serves two essential purposes: 1. It is artistic. 2. You can throw directors, old script writers, or bailiffs into it.

Now invite two or three cinema renters to dinner. (I will pay the bill.) You might ask a critic too. Tell them you are going to make a film. If (*a*) Give them tickets to see the play; (*b*) give them an Outline of History (that's all from Mr. Wells); if (*c*) give them a signed photograph. Now they know you are going to do something big.

Now form a company. Lots of nice people have been making money from steel, stealing, or stalemating, and will give you their money because they think you are an artist. There are other reasons too, but you don't want to worry about that.

Now go straight ahead. Invite everybody in the film world to a huge dinner. Ask a few Englishmen too. Talk big but seem tortured by art. In any case you will pass on the torture. And talk about England. The Press will love it. If you tell them you are going to make an English picture, the Press will not only believe you, they will make you believe it. You will read it in the papers. PETER BROOKE

Snooks Grieser, W.F.N.'s envenomed lift-boy, ensnared a certain I. Ostrer in mid-shaft recently.

Snooks "So way back in '31 you offered G.B. to the Government."

I. Ostrer "I want to say emphatically . . ."

Snooks "And they didn't want it, huh?"

I. Ostrer "I should like to . . ."

Snooks "So maybe you'd like to see the whole industry nationalised, huh?

"Third floor, shares, debentures, proxies, chairmen, directors, and *World Film News*."

A BALLAD OF THE BREADLINE

An Old Member:

"What is this crush in the breadline to-night,
Carruthers?
I shouldn't look now, but did you invite
These others?
Who are these fellows who stand in a group
Like brothers,
Huddled together and sipping their soup,
Carruthers?"

His Friend:

"They're men of the recent 'economy' rout,
Technicians,
Cameramen, carpenters, now all without
Positions.
Bred in the Industry, ready and keen
To back it."

A Voice:

"You say The Industry, surely you mean
The Racket?"

Spring is Here —or Something

Spring is such a lovesome thing: such a lovesome thing is Spring! See the happy boys and goils, coming out all over boils; down in ev'ry leafy glade, see the lover and his maid; see with what ethereal grace she takes aim and slaps his face. Hear the peewit's plaintive cry, "What-a-pretty-thing-am-I!" Hear the cuckoo's answering note, "Cut-yourself-a-slice-of-throat." See in every copse and hedge, Nature's lavish fruits and veg. Catch the heady scent of stock, dandelion and Old-Man's-Sock. Sell your *Punk Productions Ord.;* pack a bag and go abroad.

★

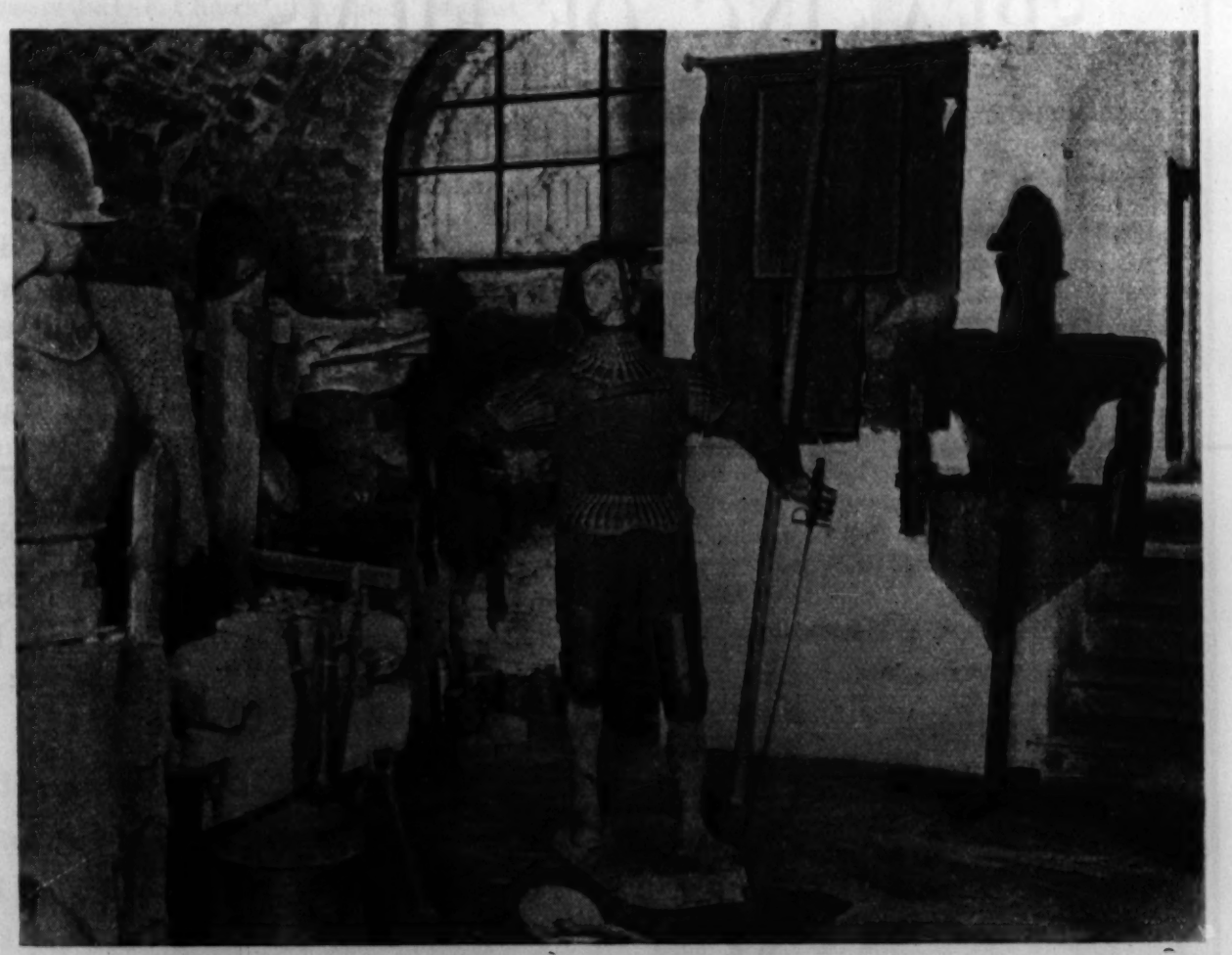
Jean Harlow
Reminds me of a marsh-marlow.

To Joan Crawford
I would gladly have awford
Everything I own
If she hadn't acquired Tone.

Gary Cooper
Is rather sooper.

I should like to be something other
Than a brother
To Jean Arthur
(And I don't mean farthur).

Arthur Dent
Fasts in Lent
At the Savoy
Oh boy!



A well-known British Producer addresses his shareholders. Left to right, representative of the bank, debenture holder, the producer, a nominee (IN DISGUISE).

SWITZERLAND

£ buys 40% more Swiss money

yet—

- **no formalities with money**
- **prices to suit every pocket**
- **quality remains unimpaired**
- **short and inexpensive journey**
- **direct rail and air services**
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Best value in Holiday Travel

THE PERFECT COUNTRY FOR A CAMERA HOLIDAY

INFORMATION: Swiss Railways and State Travel Bureau, 11B Regent Street, S.W.1, and Leading Travel Bureaux

SPEAKING OF FILMS . . .

Were We?

As you are reading World Film News you should be. If you are interested in them beyond regarding them as a medium for your personal entertainment, you will find this new publication, CINEMA MANAGEMENT, covers every aspect of the multitudinous ramifications of exhibiting and theatre control.

Its policy is independency, and its function is to help the independent exhibitor. The Service department is a veritable gold-mine of information, its make-up and features are the snappiest in the trade. If you would like a specimen copy send *2d.* in stamps to :

CINEMA MANAGEMENT
6 TOWER HILL
LONDON, E.C.3

PEOPLE WITH PURPOSES

Readers will welcome this helpful summary of what is happening in propaganda, religion, advertising, education

FILM as propaganda. The political parties make films, or exhibit them, in support of their views. The National Government and the Liberals use "prosperity" films, specially created to publicise the recent trade recovery, while the ordinary newsreels recently showed a long and brilliantly presented sequence in justification of the new defence programme, and frequent shots of troops and battleships mirror the ideals and intentions of the government. Specially created films are used in country districts where a film-show is a novelty, either in support of candidatures or for background propaganda. The Labour parties are active in the use of films: *The Defence of Madrid*, *The International Column in Action* and a Soviet film *The Road to Life* have recently had showings in various parts of the country.

National propaganda (Come to Britain) is in its early stages, but already a fair number of films have been made for export by the Travel Association. The Canadian Government shows films in this country, and the Irish Tourist Association contemplates a film campaign of some pretensions.

Film as publicity. As distinct from background propaganda, film is used by some of the larger industrial and transport interests for direct or indirect publicity. Ford and Morris and Austins give film displays in showrooms and lecture halls. All the Railways have adopted film as the natural extensions of the free lantern slides they have provided for years. Polytechnic Tours, Cooks, I.C.I., Cadburys, National Benzole, Boots, Courtaulds, the Gas Light and Coke Co., the Book Council, Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board, Shell, H.M.V. These are some of the interests which use film as part of their publicity campaigns.

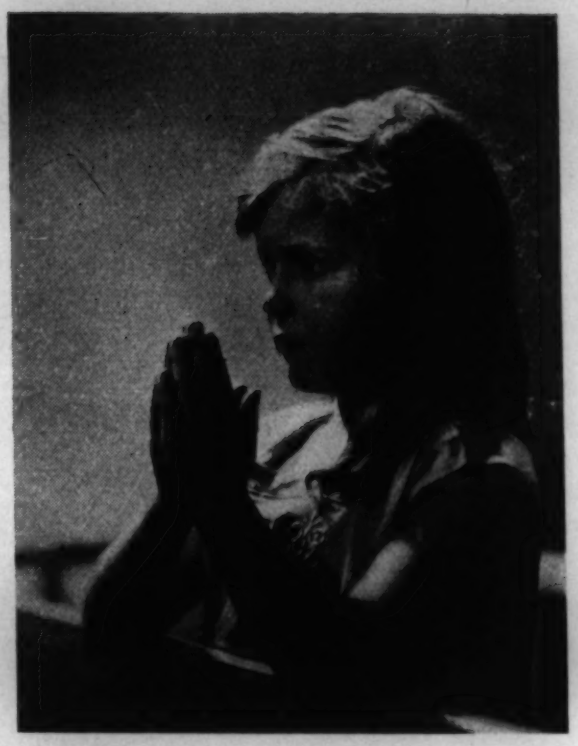
Film as instruction. Emphasis on school-films tends to obscure the fact that films are being widely used in conjunction with lectures to adults. Air-raid precautions are taught by film in many places. Miners are taught safety measures by film. Lecture and demonstrations to women are illustrated with films on machine-sewing, jam making, etc.; such hobbies as football and photography are the subject of other films for adult audiences; engineers use film in lecturing on glass-making, marine engines, steel hardening, brick-making; and doctors enlist film in lecturing on the prevention of venereal disease, tuberculosis and diphtheria.

Film and Church. The most interesting of all users of non-theatrical film is the Church. It was stated recently at Nottingham by the general secretary of the Religious Film Society that the Society has produced about thirty specialised films for evangelical purposes, and that the demand for such films was overtaxing the powers and resources of the producers. This is at first sight amazing, for not one of the commercial films mentioned above has anything like thirty films: in fact most of them have only made one or two. But we must bear in mind that the Church is one of the biggest concerns in the country, with branches everywhere, so that it is natural that even preliminary experiments in the use of film should be on a far bigger scale than those of business houses.

Here are some titles of religious films: *The Sin Bearer*, *The Life of Joseph*, *The Life of Christ* (4 hours), *God in Nature and the Human Soul*, *Sheba's God*, *Barabbas*, *Giants and Grasshoppers*, *The Common Round*, *Light in Livingstone's Land.* Shortage of religious films has caused some churchmen to use commercial films as attraction for religious meetings. This has caused comment from the local trade in some places.

If spite of trade opposition, the movement for religious films is developing rapidly. The official organ of the U.F. Church of Scotland, "Stedfast," recently published an article in support of church films. Pioneer work is being done by individual ministers in parts of England (e.g. Sheffield and Bristol). Outside this movement and violently opposed to film in all its aspects are the Irish Bishops, who continue to fulminate against the influence of what they consider to be a dangerous and disruptive social force.

Film and State. The Empire Marketing Board made about a hundred films. The G.P.O. has already made about forty. The War Office has made about a score of films, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries about a dozen, and films have also been made by the Air Ministry and the Ministry of Labour. Of these, the E.M.B. and G.P.O. films and some of the others are conceived in very broad terms as instruments of public address. Some of them on the other hand are technical instruction films for domestic use.



"Mastership" *Religious Film Society*

"The church . . . one of the biggest concerns in the country . . . its film activities will be on a bigger scale than those of business houses."

Film holds out great possibilities for public instruction and civic education, for social analysis and report, for exposition of policy. But things move slowly in the meantime. The Ministry of Health, for instance, seems to have made no films at all, a very surprising thing: this Ministry indeed left it to the Gas, Light and Coke Company to make *Housing Problems* and *Enough to Eat*, two of the most brilliant essays in public instruction that have so far been seen. R.F.

Cost of Shows, per head

Austin Motor Company film programmes in their dealers' showrooms and local lecture halls cost, on an average, 9*d.* per head of the audience.

Cadbury Brothers spend 6*d.* a head on showing a 1½-hour programme of films to family audiences; and 3*d.* per head on showing a dealer-instructional film to confectioners.

J. F. Bramley, of Austin Motors, says:

"Our figure is much higher than Cadburys because we have to go to a different class of people—the class likely to buy a motor-car. Even at ninepence a head, we consider our film advertising very economical and we propose to continue it. We get the attention of those people for over an hour, plus the opportunity of showing them our new models and putting a catalogue into their hands."

WE HAVE 2 DAYS OF RECKONING

Our films have to please two interested parties. The advertiser demands that our films make sales. Cinema managers demand that our films are good entertainment. Well, we're still in business after a good many years—and last year's output was 68 per cent up on the previous year. So we must be making SUCCESSFUL advertising films

EUROPE'S LARGEST SELF-CONTAINED ADVERTISING FILM ORGANISATION

PUBLICITY FILMS Ltd

Managing Director: G. E. TURNER

FILMCITY HOUSE UPPER ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.2

TELEPHONE: *Temple Bar* 6482

Service for Documentary Producers . . . .

SOUND CUTTING ROOMS

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A STRAND FILM

Make Your New Film through . . . . . .

The STRAND FILM Co. Ltd. 37-39 Oxford St. W.1

SIGHT AND SOUND

WINTER 1936-37

SIXPENCE

THE FILM QUARTERLY — **FOR NEWS & VIEWS**

FILMS FOR CHILDREN

SIDNEY BERNSTEIN — **SIMON ROWSON** — **EMANUEL MILLER**

IVOR MONTAGU
The Moyne Report

ALISTAIR COOKE
Films of the Quarter

FRANK GOODLIFFE
Cinemicrography

G. C. LATHAM
Films for Africans

FULLY ILLUSTRATED

OBTAINABLE FROM ALL BOOKSELLERS OR FROM THE PUBLISHERS

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE • 4 Gt. Russell Street, London, W.C.1

Advertising by Film

By P. B. Redmayne

Advertising Manager of Cadbury Brothers

FILM advertising has developed enormously during the past few years. In particular, the use of road-show programmes of different kinds, generally 16 mm. sound, has increased. For the most part, however, these programmes are run by Film Companies for manufacturers. All too often there is little sign that the manufacturer has given careful thought to these programmes.

Cadburys are one of the oldest and most consistent advertisers by means of films. They started using them in pre-war days, and have used them, in one form or another, without a break since the War. For this reason their experience may be of particular interest.

Generally, film publicity is divided into two kinds—

(*a*) "Shorts" in cinemas.

(*b*) Longer programmes generally given as road-shows and not in cinemas.

The purposes and costs of these are so entirely different that they can hardly be compared.

Taking first of all the 500 ft. "short" in cinemas, the general estimated cost for this is between 15*s*. and £1 per 1,000 viewers. It is difficult to judge the value of such films, and almost impossible to assess by sales returns. It can be said, however, that they are most useful for giving general publicity to the product and its name, and for this purpose a film which is 90% entertainment and 10% advertisement is often used.

As such, I think they should be used only by very large companies who have the extra money available for spending on this form of publicity to back-up their general advertising.

Another way in which they can be used is in what might be called "institutional" advertising —that is, making an interesting picture concerned with the firm or with the manufacture of the product. Here again, this is primarily for a large firm. While we have used this type of film for many years the tendency more recently has been to reduce our advertising in this way and put more and more into road-shows.

To my mind, the more important form of film advertising is that usually associated with road-show programmes. I say usually associated because, of course, the same programme can be given in a different way—hiring cinemas during the morning, and sometimes in the afternoon, and showing to specialised audiences.

About this type of programme, there are two theories: one, that the major part of the programme should be pure entertainment with one or two short films reserved for advertising; the other, that such a programme is not worth doing unless you can do the thing in a thoroughly interesting manner with the propaganda which you wish to put across.

The first theory (pure entertainment and a little advertising) is, I believe, most generally held. Probably because it is much the easier, and the cheaper programme to prepare, and films have to be sold to many firms who could not afford, or provide, material for a whole-length programme.

The danger in this is the difficulty of getting good films cheaply. Several of the programmes I have seen were very dull efforts, suitable perhaps for a Sunday School treat on a wet afternoon, but not as a piece of advertising for people in the habit of going regularly to the cinema. Of this type of programme I cannot speak from experience because we have never used it. I can only give my opinion that the standard of quality is often deplorably low, and that the advertisers need to be very careful that nothing is shown which is not first-class entertainment. I believe that a generally accepted cost per head for these shows works out at about 6*d*. The advertiser must consider whether he is getting sixpenny-worth of advertising to each of his audience.

The type of film advertising we ourselves have used most is a film programme, lasting 1¼ hours, dealing with our own firm and its raw materials. Little of this programme is "direct" advertising for any line; in fact, the whole programme is "institutional" or "background" advertising. I consider that a story presented in this way is of very great value. It is the next best thing to an actual visit to the Works. If people are prepared to spend 1¼ hours seeing a programme of this kind, and their interest can be kept for the whole time, then I think it is good advertising.

A programme of this kind must be done well. If it is second-rate the interest of the audience will be lost and the value of the whole programme ruined. This means that it is only worth while if a considerable amount of money can be spent on it to justify the production cost of anything from £5,000 upwards.

Besides sub-standard units, we run continually three full-size 35 mm. sound units which tour the country with lecturers. Audiences naturally vary according to the parts of the country we are in, but we rarely show to less than a quarter of a million people in a season. Where it is possible we book up a local cinema, but this can only occur in the smallest places. Usually we have to hire a hall in the town, and give performances in the afternoon and evening for three days. The unit is always accompanied by two men who are responsible, not only for booking halls and for local showing arrangements, but for linking up with our customers in the town and attending at the hall every day to give tickets and reserve seats.

We find these public performances are considerably cheaper than showing to specialised audiences. We get the whole thing for a cost of under 3*d*. per head. We also run similar shows with sub-standard machines to women's institutes, schools, social clubs, etc., but there the cost is more than double the cost of public performances.

We also book cinemas on Saturday mornings and show to school audiences. This is best done through arrangements made with the local Education Authority, so as to get their support and the interest of the teachers.

New uses of any media are always most valuable. I have left our most striking success till last. That is a long educational film for our customers. I had seen similar things shown on sub-standard sets to Grocers' Associations, etc., but the confectionery trade is much bigger and less organised, and we decided that the only way to interest them would be to give shows in cinemas in the mornings. We have now been round most of the country. The film was very carefully prepared and was primarily a contrast between a sweet shop run by an old lady, who was always in a muddle, and that run by a modern confectioner. We felt that just to make the contrast would be too heavy going for the majority of audiences, so the "pill" was wrapped up in a light story form.

The cost of these showings is hardly comparative with the others because the numbers in the audiences varied, and also because we always gave refreshments, etc. In some places it came out at several shillings per head, but even this high figure we feel would be justified if we were successful in getting half of our customers to do but one of the things advocated in the film—to be ready for our travellers when they call instead of keeping them waiting or asking them to call back again later.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Hints on Lighting

By

H. Chevalier

ONE OF THE first things to learn when shooting colour pictures is that "flat" lighting will never produce good results. The old adage "Expose for the shadows, and the high lights will take care of themselves" is not only misleading, but will positively kill the shot.

In colour photography, the high lights are the snag. If they are overexposed they become a colourless white glare exceedingly unpleasant, and underexposed, they play the devil with shadows. So the first rule in colour work becomes: Expose for the high lights and balance the shadow to suit.

Many cine-fans believe an uninteresting flat lighting is essential for safe working with Kodachrome. This is by no means the case, for good lighting is equally desirable in colour, as in black and white. This belief no doubt is a "hang-over" from the early days of colour work when the chief problem was to obtain enough light for an exposure, and one had no time to worry about quality.

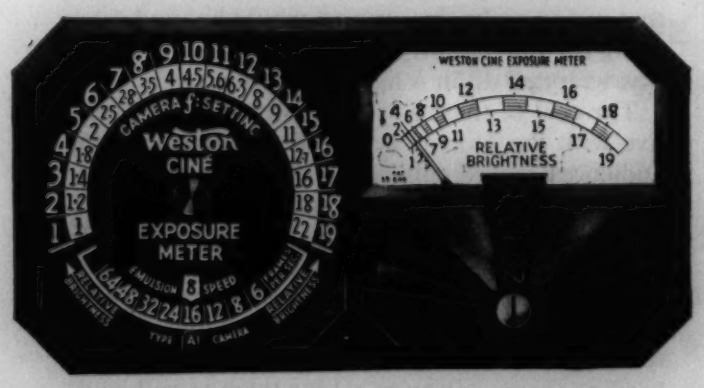
When Kodachroming, it is desirable to arrange the lighting exactly as one would for black and white, then increase the intensity, in this way obtaining a more natural effect.

The reason for the increase in light is due to the increased amount of work the light is expected to do when shooting colour.

Technicolor, the professional three colour process and Kodachrome's three colour film have great similarities for they are crossed licensed. In Technicolor, three separate films are used in what is known as a Splitter-Beam camera and increased light is required, because it has to be split up or divided between the three films. In Kodachrome only one film is used and the light must penetrate and act upon the three separate layers of emulsion, coating the film. The similarity between the two processes calls to mind the great care exercised by Technicolor cameramen when setting lights. Care that will well repay the sub-standard cine-fan, for the trouble involved.

Before each shot, light readings are taken by means of a Weston Photo-cell illuminometer, and carefully checked for back, side and front lighting intensities, before a single frame of negative is exposed.

It follows, that if people who have thousands of pounds in overheads mounting every minute, find time to stop and check lighting for every shot, the amateur should never use his camera without first consulting a reliable exposure meter.



When using colour for the first time, many amateurs find difficulty in balancing shadows, for they discover too late that shadows add "life" to the picture to a greater extent than in black and white.

Using artificial light one can control the shadows at will, obtaining soft, misty half-shadows for natural effects, or rich black shadows for dramatic action.

I find that Kodachrome revels in the latter, producing shadows with such body that they appear cut from black velvet. This type of shadow is fairly simple to obtain by setting lighting for the high lights and middle lights then keeping as much light as possible away from the shadow areas. However since Kodachrome has considerable less latitude than black and white, it is a necessity to see that middle lights are well contrasted, in other words that there is a considerable difference in intensity between the middle lights and the shadows.

For more natural effects with colour, one should allow a ratio of one-third the intensity of the high lights in the shadow areas.

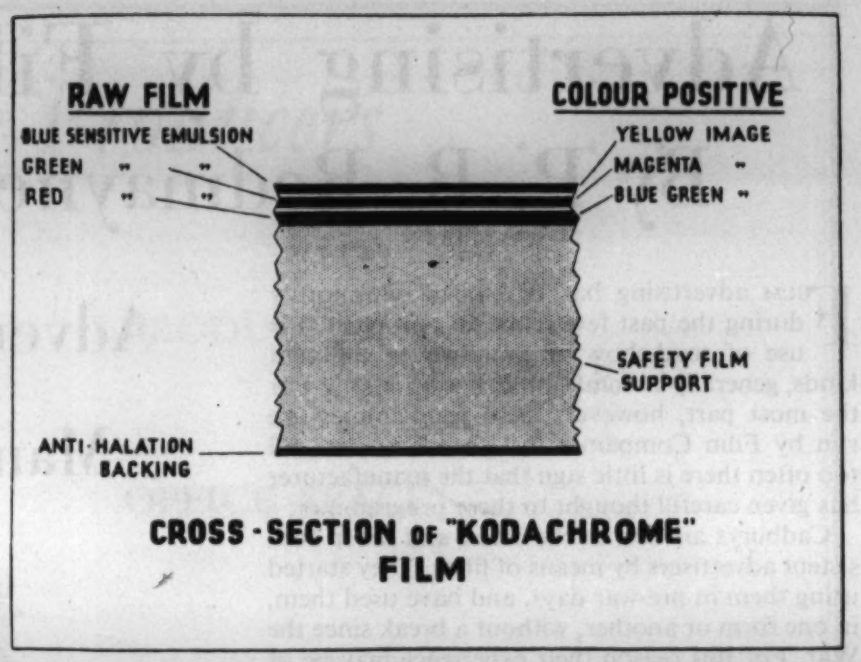
When using a Weston Cine-Exposure meter, to balance the lighting to the ratio of 1 : 3, proceed in the following way.

Take a reading with the "B" or normal pointer on your "Weston" and set your high lights to give a good exposure.

Then take a reading of the shadow lighting intensity, still keeping the "B" pointer set as before on the high light reading. If your shadow reading then corresponds to the light value number, ONE point LEFT of the "A" or left hand pointer the shadow is receiving about one third the intensity of the high light.

If the light is not quite balanced, move the lights nearer or farther from the object, until the meter informs you the value is correct.

By following these simple rules you will shoot better colour pictures and do justice to Kodachrome. However I would point out that my suggestions do not in all cases correspond with Kodak's instructions for shooting colour, so write and tell me what your experience or opinion has proved, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for a personal reply.



CROSS-SECTION OF "KODACHROME" FILM

Editing Colour Films

Editing colour films is not generally considered until the negative is exposed and processed. This attitude may be satisfactory in the case of black and white, but entirely incorrect for colour work.

Obtaining the best results from a colour film requires a more inclusive view of editing, both before and during the actual filming.

Perfect balance is the secret of colour work, and editing commences when the first rough outline of the film is committed to paper, and the producer must consider the scenes in their relationship, sequence and term of colour. This prevents serious clashes between indoor and outdoor scenes, or even between the scenes themselves, when say a sudden red may destroy a harmony of pastel shades in the setting.

Every detail should be considered, the location of the story, type of characters, colouring of face, hair, clothing, properties and backgrounds. Keeping a watchful eye on these details will produce a smoothness of working not at first apparent. Arrangement of shooting angles and sequences will avoid major clashes, deciding automatically the main colour key of the film as a whole.

When watching scenes that follow each other, one must consider also the variations in colour on the film caused by slight errors in exposure. Differences in the time of day, of the exposure, or any change of lighting conditions from daylight to artificial light and changing sky colour, will all materially effect the smoothness of the colour flow.

Remember scenes shot in the morning light will seldom match up with scenes shot later in the day, or even on a different day. Nature constantly changes her lighting and atmospheric conditions, so watch this point carefully.

The shooting of all scenes to be included in one sequence on the same roll of film, will later simplify editing for colour harmony.

Providing correct exposure is secured, all scenes photographed at the same time on the same roll of film will produce indentical colour results. For all scenes will be on the same emulsion and processed in the same chemical baths at the same time. This produces the maximum degree of constancy of colour within sequences, simplifying future editing.

Technical Notes (*contd.*)

When shooting skies with Kodachrome and a haze filter, remember the filter will naturally affect future editing seriously. As its name indicates, the haze filter is designed to overcome hazy atmospheric conditions and improve the colour value under hazy conditions. This is correct with Kodachrome in all cases except a blue sky, for a haze filter definitely lightens up the blue of a sky, and even deep blue skies appear blue grey when photographed through a haze filter.

* * * *

Regarding a splice, a minimum of film cement should be used, for any overflow on the film washes out part of the colour around the splice and makes it very noticeable when projected.

When scraping emulsion from the film preparatory to making a splice, remember only remove the emulsion down to the bluish base.

Finally, when handling colour film during editing, ALWAYS use white cotton gloves. For any colour film is far more quickly and easily finger marked or scratched, than black and white, and must be handled under scrupulously clean conditions.

Record of Painting

G. E. Prentice, of Berlin, Connecticut, has recently completed a 300 ft. film, in 16 mm. Kodachrome, of an artist painting a picture. The artist was that eminent Swedish painter of marine subjects, Leon Lundmark, who creates the stirring beauty of North Atlantic Seas.

The film is believed to be the first complete record in colour of an artist painting a picture from the bare canvas to the finished creation.

Prentice has given many screenings of the film before art classes and groups around Connecticut.

Forthcoming Books

Among forthcoming books from Newnes, who publish so many books on the cinema, are two of special interest. "Movie Merry-go-Round" (7/6 net) is by John Paddy Carstairs. No man could have been better qualified to write this book than Carstairs, whose whole life has been a vivid merry-go-round in the movie world. The book is said to strike a new note, being half-way between the highbrow professional and the popular fan stuff, thus appealing to a double public. Can this be done? is a question that W.F.N. readers will be better able to answer after reading the book. "Guest" chapters by such notabilities as Joan Crawford, Jessie Matthews and Walt Disney are an interesting new feature.

"The Cinema as a Graphic Art" is a serious and important work which no one interested in the future of the cinema should miss. It is, in fact, a book for which many of us have been waiting for a long time, and Vladimir Nilssen was the ideal man to write it. It deals exhaustively with pictorial composition in the making of films, and expounds the theory that each and every shot should be a consciously composed picture in itself. We think it is likely to create a good deal of discussion in the film world, and it is certain to offer many new ideas to jaded technicians. (10*s.* 6*d.* net.) **Advt.**

How to Select a Sound Projector

By Dave Robson

THE purchase of standard or substandard sound film projectors calls for serious consideration. No longer should the word of a clever salesman or the smart appearance of a projector be the guiding factor in the selection.

Actual use over a period of time supplies the best test of the stability and consistency of the machine—the only real safeguard against subsequent regrets.

Speaking collectively of all machines, there is none fool-proof. So much depends on the individual handling of each and every machine that one is liable to hear varying reports on quality and efficiency.

But there are definite things to look for. What, for example, do you know of the S.M.P.E. and D.I.N. sound standards on a 16 mm. projector? To buy a projector on the last-named standard would be an embarrassment because recently an official board of arbitration decided in favour of S.M.P.E. with the result that some manufacturers of 16 mm. machines are now having to alter their projectors to accommodate the required system.

The power consumption of the apparatus is an important consideration, not only because of subsequent expense but also because of possible wiring difficulties on the premises where the projector is to be used. Alternating current is necessary, as in its absence a rotary converter will have to be used. This means an addition of £17 to £25 on the cost.

The final test of any sound reproducer lies in its ability to play back on film a constant note, without a waver in the sound over a period of minutes. If it cannot do so, reject it finally, because it will never improve, even after "running in." On the other hand it will actually get worse.

As far as the mechanics of the machine are concerned, you must first look into the movement for drawing the film into the aperture. It should definitely be one of the following:

a. An intermittent movement employing a Maltese cross and cam, the sprocket engaging in at least two perforations of the film at each pull.

b. Equally satisfactory is a shuttle movement likewise engaging in two perforations at each turn. (This is of utmost importance.)

Further points:—

1. All sprockets should be fitted with pad or guide rollers that lift off and are retained clear of them so that threading is simplified and danger of damage to the film considerably reduced.

2. See that the aperture plates, gates and springs are accessible and easily removed.

3. See that provision is made for automatic engagement of the film perforations over the intermittent sprocket.

4. See that the threading is simple and that it does not demand twists in the film.

5. See that the sound-gate slit, through which the light shines on to the sound track, is not hard to get at in order to keep clean and that the photo cell and exciter lamps are positively of the pre-focussed or fixed type. The focussing of an exciter lamp is a delicate matter. It is a job for experts. The exciter lamp of the machine selected should be pre-set by the manufacturers, i.e. non-adjustable.

As for the light source, the lamp should also be of the pre-focussed type and should be in the region of 500 to 1,000 watts, certainly not less if an efficient light is required for a throw from thirty to seventy feet. The lamp should preferably be air-cooled from a fan, and a humidifier should be employed that blows a damp column of cold air on the film.

The machine should ideally be capable of loading 1,600 feet reels; the take-up drive should be directly coupled. (Belts and chains are not so reliable and are likely to give trouble.)

Finally, choose a lens to give you the size of picture you desire for your screen and state the projector throw to the dealer.

* * * *

Picture Projection

THERE ARE 1,440 separate pictures to every ninety feet of 35 mm. standard cinematograph film, of which 24 are projected every second. However, you are possibly unaware that you actually see each separate picture twice on the screen in rapid succession, making a total of 2,880 visions per minute.

This is necessary to make the action smooth and flickerless on the screen, in every 1/24th of a second you see the same picture twice. The reason for this is because a two-bladed fan, or shutter, as it is professionally termed, is called upon to cut off the light from the film as it is being drawn into the projection aperture, and the second blade again cuts off the light when the film is standing stationary for the 1/24th of a second during projection to balance the light period.

By virtue of this fact alone, some 50% of the possible light to the screen is lost, and other factors such as film density, optic losses, and air pollution allow but only an infinitesimal amount of the original generated light to ever reach the screen.

In addition to these light losses, perforated rubber screens used in Cinemas to allow the sound to penetrate, cause considerable absorbtion of light, therefore, one will appreciate the enormous candlepower necessary to project a moving image to the screen. Cleanliness is the very essence of success, and every cinema operator knows that, for not only has he to keep his optics clean, but also the 1/10,000″ area through which the sound passes on its way to the loud speakers, for a particle of dust or dirt would turn that sound into a distorted jumble.

* * * *

New Talking Machine

A new talking machine has just been perfected. A thin serrated strip of fibre is pulled through a little tin about the size of a tin of boot polish. The tin is really a microphone with a vibrating point in the middle. The serrated fibre rubs on this vibrating point and a voice—Cissie, if you pull the fibre quickly; American, if you pull it moderately; hesitatingly senile if slowly—says "Crikey! That's Shell, that was."

FILM YOUR OWN VIEWPOINT

By Andrew Buchanan (Seventh of a Series for Amateurs)

HAVING learnt how to apply imagination to the filming of "views" in the countryside and the town, the factory and the farm, the time is ripe for filming your own views: for an attempt to put on the screen your ideas on problems of national and international importance. Ambitious? Certainly, yet perfectly possible. But to express one's views on the screen is surely to descend to propaganda! True, but there are two kinds of propaganda; the first is widespread. It imprisons us, and strives to perpetuate the existing order of things. It is very proper propaganda, so proper that it is not regarded as propaganda at all! The second kind seeks to alter existing conditions—to make the civilised world a finer and more intelligent place. It is always denounced—impropaganda, in fact.

Now although one's views must be for or against something, the successful screen journalist is the man who can see both sides of a question, present them with a minimum of bias, and leave his audience to draw its own conclusions. As an artist he is satisfied with having set them thinking—in itself an achievement! No one can be utterly impartial, non-political, non-sectarian, and all the rest of it, but one can certainly rise above the angry mass and, from a height, look down on the scene, observing the percentage of truth in both sides, which is invisible to all those distracted by the struggle.

Everything is Propaganda

The amateur director should seek to strike a happy medium between the superficial newsreel and the penetrating *March of Time*, and as he is not concerned with the difficulties of presenting propaganda on a commercial screen, he can shoot who he likes, how he likes. Everything is propaganda for something or somebody. Maybe it is American Womanhood, glorified in practically every Hollywood feature, or the British Army patronised in every newsreel. It may be something really useful like the telephone—but regardless of subject matter, there is room for creative treatment in the analysing and building up of a sequence which seeks to solve or clarify important problems, and it will do the amateur director a lot of good to concentrate on the job of utilising his everyday surroundings to exemplify his points. This entails dramatising reality—reconstructing certain past events in order to show how they have created a current position. He will find his themes offering many opportunities for using up material previously shot, and it will have a new significance—whether a football crowd, a branch of blossom or a cat fight.

Let us consider a subject of universal interest—Rearmament. Why does a nation increase its arms? Is it logical for it to do so? Is the crippling expense really worth it? Will the present generation benefit, or is all this defence business for future generations—or for the sake of those who make the armaments? If the amateur feels that the only way to make his nation safe is to fill it with more arms than any other nation, he should pay tribute to the strength of his land by showing a series of impressive shots of battleships, troops and aircraft, intercut to create an attractive tempo.

A great deal can be done with shadows on a plain wall, upon which silhouettes of map shapes can be shown to portray the vulnerable position of this nation, the strength of that nation, and so on, and I have managed to create the impression that hundreds of people are marching past, by a confused shadow of half a dozen pairs of feet.

Informative titles should accompany the parade of the forces, which tell of the position in 1914, and draw a comparison with to-day. However, there are two sides to a battleship, and even to a shell, and the other side is equally interesting. Therefore, the director should go down to fundamentals, and raise the question of whether armaments are, after all, the best means of ensuring peace. If they are, he can strengthen the case for them. If they are not, he can help to destroy it. How?

Scenario Suggestions

One simple way is on a nursery floor, upon which two little boys are sprawling. Before each is a barrier. It can be a coal scuttle, an arm-chair or a sunshade. In close-ups, they peep suspiciously at each other, trying to find out what is hidden behind the barricades. One has a gun. Its nozzle is visible. The other gets a gun. The first boy therefore secures a second gun. So does the "enemy." The first boy, seeing two guns glaring at him, obtains a third. The "enemy" does likewise. Then a fourth, a fifth, and a sixth. Finally, after showing each boy in separate shots, they are seen surrounded by guns, and the temptation to fire them is overpowering. What a waste if they were never used at all. And so one boy fires, but it so happens that the other boy also fires—and they are both laid out, for the coal scuttle and the sunshade topple on to them. Neither knows who was the defender or the aggressor, but both have lost, or won.

Contrast that with two other boys—also lying on the floor. One is suspicious, and has surrounded himself with guns and forts, and the fender. The other is not suspicious at all. He sits unprotected, building with metal strips. He waves to his fierce neighbour, who scowls. The scowl fades as the war-minded boy watches the building grow higher and higher. He aims his guns at the contented unarmed boy, but cannot find a reason to fire. He is in no danger of being attacked. The unprotected boy is certainly not an enemy. Ultimately he accepts his neighbour's invitation to join him in building with the strips. Bunk! Maybe, but a point worth showing, and no greater bunk than the other two nations arming madly against each other. It raises the suggestion that a nation without any defence at all may be safer than one bristling with arms. No one has tried it yet, and so no one is qualified to damn the idea. Let the screen express it.

The juveniles can symbolise the international position, and they can be followed by a short, sharp sequence of placards—headlines—and posters: GERMANY ARMS—ITALY ON WAR BASIS—MILLIONS MORE FOR ARMY—NAVY—AIR DEFENCE, etc., etc., presented with rapidity. A title follows—*Which is the Enemy?* Every nation is, of every other nation—armaments for defence being interpreted abroad as weapons of aggression. A nation without arms is nobody's enemy, and the citizens of a neighbouring nation cannot be invited to war against it, or to defend themselves against a country which does not possess the means to attack.

Subjects are limitless

You can portray the people of other nations in little cameos, quite simply, and contrast the activities of peace—industry—agriculture—shipping—with the cessation of all progress when war bursts forth—and you can show war vividly with a twopenny atlas. Tear the maps out, arrange them on the grass, and set a light to them. Feet march over them. Arms brandishing rifles rush across the screen—the flames on the burning maps rise higher—a head bends in sorrow—more feet—and then desolation—ashes—a darkening sky. Futility. Or, if you think otherwise, Honour, Glory, Freedom.

I can offer but the barest outline of an approach to such a subject, and am avoiding technicalities, for the purpose of this article is to establish a general method of dealing with subjects, which, at first sight, offer themselves to conventional treatment only. To seek the origin behind the contemporary event, and to dig down to the roots of things is the most fascinating task a film maker can set himself.

The subjects are limitless—there's the traffic problem, unemployment, housing—even the British film problem: all are suitable subjects for the amateur who wishes to express his views on the greatest of comedy-dramas—civilisation.

PRIMITIVES FOR F.S. BOOKING

The three primitives, *The Secret of a Queen*, *Le Bouquet de Violettes* and *Satan Finds Mischief*, are available for Film Society bookings through Cinema Contact Ltd., Oxford House, 9–15 Oxford Street, London, W.1. Made between 1904 and 1906, each is synchronised, and 1,500 feet in length.

* * *

Early films of historical value were discussed in "The Raw Material of Movie History" by A. Vesselo in our last issue. These are available through the National Film Library.

The Scottish Festival

Fifty-three entries were received for Scotland's fourth Amateur Film Festival. This is the largest number ever received. Anthony Asquith adjudicated.

The prize for the most outstanding film went to Montagu Pictures, Newcastle-on-Tyne, for *The Day Thou Gavest*, an account of how God's day is spent by the cyclist, the hiker, the motorist, the churchgoer.

"Without any qualification, this is one of the best films of its kind I have ever had the pleasure of seeing," said Mr. Asquith.

Commenting on the high standard of the films in general, Mr. Asquith added that there was now no justification for the professionals' patronising attitude toward the amateur.

He warned amateurs, however, to stick more closely to subjects with which they were familiar, and to be more strong-willed when it came to cutting out shots for which they had a sentimental attachment but which did not mean much to the film as a whole.

The following were the awards:

VICTOR SAVILLE CUP for the most outstanding film: *The Day Thou Gavest* (Montagu Pictures, Newcastle-upon-Tyne).

BUCHANAN CUP for the best film combining drama with realism: *This England* (Godiva Film Group, Coventry).

FICTION FILMS. *Amateur Cine World* Prize, £10: *This England*.

NON-FICTION FILMS. *World Film News* Prize, £5, for Clubs: *The Day Thou Gavest*. A. B. King Prize, £5 5*s*., for individuals: *Another Happy Day* (T. Lawrenson, Dundee).

ANY TYPE OF FILM made by a resident in Scotland. *Glasgow Evening News* and *Daily Record* Prize, £10 (Equal): *Creels* (J. H. Lorimer, Dundee), *Hell Unlimited* (Norman Maclaren and Helen Biggar, Glasgow), *Fourth in Hand* (Meteor Society, Glasgow).

BEST COLOUR FILM. *Sight and Sound* Prize, £10 10*s*. (Equal): *The Road to the Isles* (M. B. Anderson, Newton Mearns), *The Highlands of Scotland* (W. D. Jelfs, Glasgow), *Presentation of the Colours* (J. E. Davies, Wembley).

NOVICES. Fiction: *Just One Thing After Another* (F. M. Marshall, Glasgow). Non-Fiction: *Monty Meets Disaster* (A. G. Greaves, Newcastle). Resident in Scotland: *Symphony of Nature* (D. Mackenzie, Hamilton).

The adjudicator gave a warning against a facile impressionism resulting in films which are often surprisingly brilliant, beautifully photographed and ingeniously cut, but which, when all is said, seldom get beneath the surface. Realism in subject must be accompanied by realism of purpose. *Hell Unlimited* was the only film whose directors approached their subject in this manner. For this reason (discounting its conclusion) this film was the most successful as it was the most ambitious of the entries.

The Scottish Festival proved, he thought, that amateurs are well on the way to meeting the professionals on their own ground so far as technique goes. With a more careful analysis, more ruthless scissors, and a surer realisation of the drama beneath the surface of everyday life they will soon be producing films which will be a worthy contribution to the cinema and the community.

The main fault of the story films was that they were not sufficiently dramatic. Certainly they dealt with exciting things—murder, suicide, death rays and every kind of violence. The characters to whom these thrilling things happened, however, were ciphers, and no one minded what happened to a cipher.

"As soon as you believe in a person on the screen," said Mr. Asquith, "you are interested in what happens to him." That was why he thought *This England* the best of the fiction films. Simply and charmingly it told a believable story about conceivable people.

The merit of the Meteor Society's *Fourth in Hand* was its neatness of construction. Its makers had known what to put in and what to leave out. Amateur films too often elaborated details and left major points in obscurity.

Of so great interest were the documentaries that Mr. Asquith had difficulty in making a choice. *Creels*, J. H. Lorimer's film of Scottish fishing life on the East coast, was illuminatingly shot and constructed. *Hell Unlimited*, by Norman Maclaren and Helen Biggar, showed imagination in the use of models and was quickly and imaginatively cut.

Amateur Crown Challenged

The title "King of Amateurs," given by WORLD FILM NEWS to "Pop" Burnford (in a recent article), has been challenged.

T. Lawrenson, of Dundee, maker of three Child pictures, and winner of the *Daily Mail* International trophy, claims first place among amateurs the world over.

His first film won the gold medal in a Home Movies competition in 1934. Following that on two successive years he won the *Daily Mail* International trophy. He secured in 1935 a first place in an American competition.

This year he won a prize for his most recent film *Another Happy Day*, at the Scottish Amateur Film Festival.

"When I first became interested in cinematography," said Mr. Lawrenson in a letter to *W.F.N.*, "I felt there was no reason why the standard of 'Child' pictures should be inferior to that of any other type of documentary, and I decided to do what I could in the matter. In this I can claim no small measure of success, as all three of such films I have made, have been suitably recognised."

When he was twelve he received a School of Art part time scholarship and studied until he was fifteen, when he began work as a nautical instrument maker. He made ships' compasses, etc., with a firm on Tyneside.

Eight years ago he began his present occupation, as a magazine illustrator with a Dundee firm. He took up film making, he said, "as a means of satisfying my desire to create something which, besides being artistic, would be an outlet for my practical capabilities."

Mr. Lawrenson finds editing intensely interesting and believes he owes most of his success to his ability as a cutter. He gives great care to the preparation of his scripts, making rough sketches of each shot in most cases and paying a good deal of heed to continuity.

The child (Mr. Lawrenson's small son) is a charming child, charmingly presented. Great patience must have been used in getting each shot, and the child played up to the filming very well. It is easily seen that Mr. Lawrenson loved his subject, catching as he did the child's changing moods, from laughter over a new toy, to a crying spell at bedtime.

" Another Happy Day "

NEWS FROM AMATEUR CLUBS

ACE MOVIES. Hon. Sec. Channon Wood, 15 Openview, S.W.18; Studio: 90 High Street Mews, Wimbledon, S.W.

Luna Park has reached final stages of production and the next two productions are in course of preparation. One will be an adaptation of a famous medieval legend which Ace Movies has had under consideration for over five years. A solution to certain technical difficulties has now been found, but the cast is not yet finally selected. Direction will be in the capable hands of Clifford West, director of *Driftwood*, and photography in charge of Ben Carleton, better known for his directorial activities but whose practical camera experience is wide. Settings will be from original designs by Maurice Fowler who was responsible for the settings in *Three Floors Up*, *Marionetti* and *Luna Park*. The last two films have not yet been generally seen but the settings in the first have received unstinted praise from critics.

This new production is the most ambitious Ace Movies has undertaken. It is hoped that with the finished film Ace Movies will set a new and higher standard in amateur film play production. A certain nervousness is felt, however, as the subject is one that calls for great sincerity in treatment and which, if successful will be a triumph, if it misses fire will be—a flop. Particulars of the title and legend are therefore withheld for the present.

The title of the second production in course of preparation has not yet been finally decided but it is a modern crime story from a rather unusual angle. Channon Wood will direct.

Both films will require large casts and applications for membership are invited. A vacancy also occurs for a cameraman with own 16 mm. camera.

BECKENHAM CINE SOCIETY: Secretary, Miss M. Davies, 105 Clockhouse Road.

Activities : Lectures by well-known men are being given on technical matters.

Film shows and talks are being given to other clubs and societies in the district, and members of these organisations are invited to the studio, theatre and club room so that they can see what is being done.

Outings and entertainments are arranged for members. On March 8th a large party attended the Whitehall Cine Society's Exhibition. On March 6th, a dance was held for members and their friends, during which filming took place at intervals: the shots thus obtained will be connected with other shots of local interest. The resulting film will be shown to the people of Beckenham and District. Arrangements have also been made for several cars to take members to North Wales during the Easter holidays, when it is hoped that a film in natural colour will be made.

The members meet regularly every Tuesday evening. The Secretary would be pleased to forward invitation tickets to any of the meetings to anybody who is interested in cine work.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY. During January the C.F.S. gave 24 shows. The display at Ilford Town Hall on March 15th completed the Suburban Town Hall series, which has included Lewisham, Finsbury and Battersea. The success of these independent shows has been such that arrangements are being made for other local town halls this season and all the bookings will be repeated next year. *Aran of the Saints* and *The Holy Mass*, the latter with commentary, have been the chief features of these programmes.

The Society's last production, *Just for Today* is being followed by *The Man Who Feared Children*, and a film dealing with the position of Catholic Youth in Industrialism to-day. Mr. Terence McArdle (recent winner of *Amateur Cine World* competition) is directing the latter.

The C.F.S. has a catalogue of 8 mm. films in preparation and full particulars may be had from the Hon. Assistant Secretary, 36 Great Smith Street.

Those members of the C.F.S. who have not yet paid their subscriptions for 1937 are reminded that these are now overdue and should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, 36 Great Smith Street.

ELTHAM CINE SOCIETY held a Gala Night on March 19 to celebrate progress since its inauguration two years ago, when it consisted of a few enthusiasts, very little apparatus and no headquarters. Two members of the Society have constructed recording equipment with satisfactory results, and work has begun on a sound film, to be made in Kodachrome and disc-synchronised. By means of gearing, the camera can be coupled to the disc recorder, thus ensuring faithful synchronisation, and the projector may be coupled in a similar manner. The new production is a version of the fairy story *The Emperor's New Clothes*, and costumes and scenery have been designed by H. McCready, a member of the Society and an illustrator of fairy books. A small group have been busy at the studio constructing a 35 mm. sound projector, which should shortly be ready for use.

The Club will hold its Annual Dinner on Saturday, April 10. All applications for full or associate membership should be made to the Acting Hon. Secretary: Miss V. D. White, 36 Craigton Road, Eltham, S.E.9.

KINGSTON CINE CLUB was formed a little over a year ago, and now has 30 members. It recently opened some new studios in Kingston, with an up-to-date lighting plant of considerable power, enabling the filming of comparatively large scenes. The studio has four different types of wall decoration, so that sets are permanently in position. There are drawing-room, hall, library and dining-room sets, together with a glass side to the studio which can be used for factory workshops, draughtsmen's offices, artists' studios, etc. The lighting consists of a large main overhead reflector containing lights giving 5,000 watts. This reflector is mounted on a movable frame which can be wheeled to any part of the studio, and is adjustable for height. There is also a series of side floods, spot lights and rifles. Lamps are connected by Cab Tyre cable to a main distributing organ. This is fitted with two sub-main switches and fuses, each feeding four switch sockets and engaging with two pin plugs from the lamp leads. Cab Tyre cable carries the mains through two leads to the organ, which is in the charge of the assistant electrician. The head electrician is responsible for the position of lights in conjunction with the cameramen, as three sizes of films are taken simultaneously—8 mm., 9.5 mm. and 16 mm. Two evenings have been devoted to the first indoor production, which is one of four "Quickies" to be produced so as to form a small library of films as soon as possible.

Owing to the insufficient number of women members for casting purposes, the ladies' subscription has been fixed at 15*s*. per annum instead of the usual 30*s*. All applications should be made to the Hon. Secretary, 24 Sandhurst Avenue, Surbiton.

THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY Kinematograph Section held its Annual General Meeting on Thursday, March 18. The report of the Joint Hon. Secretaries indicated considerable progress during the year and a gratifying increase in membership.

The meetings covered a wide variety of subjects, including studio lighting, colour films, editing, cartoons, modern laboratory practice and sound recording, while on the amateur side a series of representative films were shown.

During the year, the 35 mm. projector was equipped for sound by Sound Installation Services Ltd., and Messrs. Kodak presented to the Society 16 mm. and 8 mm. projectors and a screen.

Four sub-committees were formed during the year. The first, dealing with the Kinematograph Exhibition and Sub-Standard Film Competition, staged in December a comprehensive display of stills and apparatus. In the competition, no fewer than 38 films were accepted, and one really outstanding natural-history film was awarded a plaque, struck to the designs of Bertram Cox, F.R.P.S. The Board of Judges included, in addition to Society members, Miss Mary Field (now a member), F. Pullin and R. Herring.

The Kinematograph Section of the Photographic Exhibition is in future to be included in the Kinematograph Exhibition.

Sub-Committee "B" made considerable progress in regard to co-ordination with Trade Societies. The Association of Cine Technicians is now affiliated with the R.P.S., and the Guild of Projectionists has applied for affiliation.

The chief work of Sub-Committee "C" has been the inauguration of a Federation of Kinematograph Societies, in which twenty leading amateur societies are actively interested. A Joint Panel with the British Film Institute, to investigate a proposal for the production by amateurs of films for charities and other organisations, has been formed.

Sub-Committee "D" was responsible for publicity and propaganda.

The next meeting of the Kine Section is to be held at 35 Russell Square, on Friday, April 23, at 7 p.m. A further selection of films awarded certificates in the Sub-Standard Film Competition will be shown, and T. A. Glover, A.R.P.S., F.R.G.S., will talk on his experiences while filming location shots in Africa, and will show selections from his films, including, it is hoped, *Song of Freedom*.

Tickets may be obtained from the Joint Secretary, R. Howard Cricks, F.R.P.S., 159 Wardour Street, London, W.1.

MUSIC

Notes and Theories by Leslie Perkoff

I

In recent years the significant thing about the film industry has been its growing attraction for those creative individuals in letters and music. In the case of letters, events have given some glaring examples of the fallacy of expecting writers who are competent in the technique of novel writing and even the drama necessarily to make competent scenarists. The same point can be made about composers: those musicians with an orthodox grasp of their art who do not necessarily see their work in film composition with a cinematic perspective.

In the film medium with all its essentials that make for synthesis, the problem of music is a difficult one when antiquated methods of providing clumsy and mostly noisy symphonic backgrounds still persist.

Music being an abstract art, it is particularly difficult to assess its proper relationship to the unity of a film. To elucidate this, one must sift the various rôles of music in film production. Its superficial yet nevertheless important use is in its adherence to the story development when a crooner gets over his number as in a Bing Crosby opus or when Grace Moore satisfies the demands of her public with the aid of some operatic fragments. Much of the music in a film like *Dreaming Lips* can be placed in this category despite a comparative highbrow appeal. Here the music is inevitably bound up with the plot and thus patterned according to the nature of the film. Moreover, in this case it presents no undue complexity for the musician who is engaged in co-ordinating the score. His scope here is limited in a way, and the demands on what cinematic feeling he may possess, are small.

II

Music in its most profound use in the cinema must be in its rôle as an integral part of the cinematic scheme, in creating atmosphere and in developing emotional content. The success of this depends chiefly on the composer's willingness and initiative to throw overboard many of his orthodox methods of composition in the same way that the novelist-turned-scenarist might have to give up lengthy polemics and descriptive embellishments for the economic *tempo* of film. Realising the possibilities in this medium, it is not too much to assert that the composer must assume and demand as important a status in the making of a film as the art director, the editor and even the dialogue writer. Viewing his work as something incidental and not integral, it is understandable why he will be less concerned with using style and method than with drawing his fees.

III

While one can understand and analyse the technical progress in such branches of the cinema so native to its very existence as photography, editing and montage, music still remains a spurious and neglected child. Nevertheless, from much good work in film composition and tentative attempts to prove that it is more than a mere accessory to a production, it should be possible to formulate certain theories about its possibilities and appropriate function.

IV

It cannot but be ultimately accepted that the use of sound effects and even the kind of music entirely divorced from the laws of composition, can be heightened to a definite art of its own; in point of fact, an art which could be practised by a versatile and conscientious director or scenarist with some basic knowledge of music. In discussing this therefore, can we place such exploitation of sound in the category of music and term the co-ordinating brain behind it a composer? Since music is but the science of sound and craftsmen without labels may tend to get lost in the vortex of a studio, it remains a matter of convenience and even necessity to couple sound effects with music.

V

Fritz Lang's *Dr. Mabuse* presents in many of its sequences an outstanding example of how sound effects have enhanced the emotional appeal and unity of a film. Dealing with psychological material, such a film lends itself best to the horizontal line of sound where the mind can assimilate with greater clarity the association of melodic sound and certain moods. Thus where a series of *timpani* beats or a sustained note of a wind instrument might achieve certain results with the minimum of effort, the vertical system of harmony as used in the symphonic sphere might neutralise the cumulative result as conceived by producer and director. (Sound, however, could be used even harmonically and contrapuntally, but not necessarily within the symphonic sphere and orthodox laws of composition.)

That the co-ordinating brain of Lang was responsible to a large degree for the sound effects in *Dr. Mabuse*, is more or less certain on account of the fact that his latest film *Fury* had an unmistakably similar treatment of sound effects. This in spite of the fact that Franz Waxman wrote the score.

VI

Ruling out the elements of charlatanry and private codes as practised by some modern poets, poetry embraces the treatment of images and the presentation of ideas and moods through this medium. Further, the success of poetry rests on the relationship of images to one another; in other words, relevance, form and rhythm. Similar principles can be applied to the use of sound in a film. The film medium, however, more dynamic than any form of literature, imparts its messages to the consciousness by the basis of photographic statement. That we must take as being the process of building up an idea, but the more complex operations in building up an appeal to the senses, call upon the uses of sound effects to give significance and continuity to various scenes.

The film editor, we know, strives to give smoothness to the scheme of action, to find some photographic link between two different scenes or even detail shots. A similar and as difficult a task must devolve on the individual responsible for sound. For example, the possible sound application in giving rhythm and mental colour to two totally different scenes:

Scene	*Scene*
Fade out lake at night.	Fade in early morning at noisy station.
Resolution of the bridge between night and early morning: A low note ascending to a high pitch.	
Photographic statement of the faint momentum of dark water.	Momentum of hurrying people, newsvendors, porters.
Association and blending of momenta: A soft arpeggio increasing in volume and taking on a new rhythmical stridency.	

The composer taking such guiding theories as the basis for his work in this particular instance, must then proceed to give shape to his material; in other words, to create an element of synthesis within the general synthesis.

Hugh Leslie Perkoff:
Formerly on the editorial staff of the *Sunday Referee* and later a music critic for some time for that paper. In recent times a contributor to *News Review*. Has recently left for Vienna to act as a foreign correspondent.

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The Vulgar Film in Lilac-Scented Cambridge

By Arthur Elton

ONCE upon a time it was easy to weed out enthusiasts from among the dozens who were looking for work in documentary. One asked, "Have you ever taken your enthusiasm to the practical point of making a substandard film?" And ninety-nine out of a hundred jobseekers faded away. But things have changed since then.

Ask that question to-day at a Cambridge Society, and three-quarters of the members—dons, fellows, lecturers, graduates, undergraduates, exhibitioners, freshmen, rowing men, racing men, nothing-in-particular men (and women)—answer by producing 16 mm. spools from their pockets in dozens.

Five years ago a flowing tie, a year's subscription to the London Film Society, and proof that you had seen *Potemkin* at least twice was sufficient: you could claim a place beside Grierson, Flaherty and Pudovkin.

To-day the *dilletante* has almost disappeared. In his place, men and women fit up their bedrooms with substandard rewinders, cover their writing tables with draft scenarios and turn local hospitals and laboratories into locations. Lecturers to Cambridge film enthusiasts at question time are asked, not what they think of Eisenstein's montage, but how much does film cost; which is the best camera and who does the best developing.

Vitamins, Clouds, Gliders

At the moment at Cambridge, men and women are making films instead of talking about other people's. A film on vitamins is just being finished. A film on ribbon development is planned. One man is recording cloud structure, another is co-operating in a film on gliders.

Co-ordinating all these activities is CAMBRIDGE FILM PRODUCTIONS, an undergraduate society with backing from the livelier fellows to ensure continuity. Its first film—*Psychology To-day*—has just appeared. Though it has its weaknesses, it is a creditable job. The film tries to put briefly and in *March of Time* style the theory and practice of psychology. As one would expect, the parts dealing with practice, that is, the achievements of industrial psychologists and the like, are much better than the sections dealing with theory. Cambridge Film Productions would be well advised to stick to the presentation of objective fact, at any rate for the present. An arty sequence in slow motion of someone running up and down stairs, intended to illustrate the mechanism of the dream, is not to be commended.

The film is unfortunately spoiled by its commentary, verbosely written in the style of a second-rate text book, and spoken too fast in a high squeaky voice. Rumour says—we hope without truth—that the commentator is to be explained by the fact that when £30 was urgently needed to complete production someone offered to put up the money. And the price? The price, it is reputed, was that the someone should speak the commentary.

And now for wider issues. With young intelligent Cambridge making films (many enthusiasts give up their vacations for it) one would expect the governing bodies of the University to back them. Is not there here the opportunity to bring the scientific and social achievements of the world to the lecture rooms and laboratories?

Though Cambridge's individual contributions to science and learning are great, its general standards of internal teaching are low. Shield the young mind from knowledge of the world to-day is the unspoken moral of half the representatives of the various bodies who govern the various triposes.

The Vulgar World

Quavering behind the silver and plate of high tables, sniffing behind the snuff boxes, mincing up dark passages to scholarly sitting rooms, teetering round the quadrangles, the out-of-date academe makes his influence felt in every laboratory and lecture room in the University.

Films? Films belong to the outside vulgar world and not to lilac-scented Cambridge. The makers of *Psychology To-day* wanted to show their film at the psychology school (which has a sound projector), many of whose members had actively co-operated in production. Did the authorities who decide these things say, "Our students should see this film. It may be bad. It may be good. But it ought to be seen—and encouraged." Of course not. They deliberated and then prosily decided that its showing was inconsistent with the aims of student education.

Lots of Cambridge schools are fitted with sound projectors. Are they used? Very little. Can they be used out of lecture hours for others to show films? No. Is there some legal or licensing reason why not? No. Why are they not so used? Ask the question in Latin, and you may get an answer, if you are lucky.

OXFORD FILM SOCIETY: A successful season ended with a programme on March 7th featuring *Niemansland*, an anti-war propaganda film produced in Germany in 1932. Directed by Victor Trivas, it sets out to show the stupidity, rather than the horror of war, by stressing the natural fraternity of soldiers of various nationalities brought together in 'No Man's Land'. *Niemansland* was shown in London during the end of 1932 under the title of *War is Hell*. The supporting programme included Rotha's *Contact*, Holmes' *Medieval Village*, and *How to Sleep* by Robert Benchley, dramatic critic of the *New Yorker*.

The Society is holding a short summer season during May and the earlier part of June. All enquiries should be sent to E. F. Bowtell, Hon. Secretary, 105 Victoria Road, Oxford.

DEVON AND EXETER FILM SOCIETY: Although newly formed, all membership vacancies have been filled. Activities have begun with a short season of international films, including *Shipyard*, *Kameradschaft*, *Night on the Bare Mountain* and *Le Dernier Milliardaire*. A full programme is being arranged for next winter, when the Society hopes to extend its activities in various directions. Hon. Secretary: H. W. Morgan, University College of the South West of England, Exeter.

Film Society News

THE LONDON FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY carried on its vigorous tradition on Sunday, March 7th, when it showed the only remaining copy of Fritz Lang's *Siegfried*. In support was the première of the new G.P.O. film, *Calendar of the Year*, a new G.B. film *Fish Face*, by Mary Field, and *Rainbow Dance* by Len Lye.

A record number attended and the Society now has a membership of over four hundred. Apart from its Sunday film shows the Society does much other work, such as shows of amateur films on week-day nights, visits to specialist cinemas at reduced prices and the issuing of a guide to all the happenings in London in connection with films.

At present it is aiming to establish branch societies in most London suburbs, and to this end two such societies at Sudbury and Wimbledon have already affiliated. Through this means they get membership subscriptions at reduced rates.

THE FILM SOCIETY OF GLASGOW: Chairman: C. A. Oakley; Hon. Secretary: D. Paterson Walker, 127 St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

At the eighth meeting on March 14th, *Thunderbolt Express*, a Mack Sennett film of 1930, and *The Old King and the Young King*, with Emil Jannings, were the principal films. A Fischinger short and *In the Land of the Red Blanket*, an Africa Film Production, were also in the programme.

The Glasgow Film Society has recently attempted to find out the preferences of its members by the use of printed slips bearing the names of films shown. The slips are issued with the programmes and members are asked to express their likes and dislikes. The Society's last show is on April 4th, when they will revive *Maskerade* and *The Slump is Over*. On April 11th, Mr. Paul Rotha will lecture and show some of his most recent films.

WEST ESSEX FILM SOCIETY: The affiliation of this Club to the Royal Photographic Society is likely to be effected through the new "Kine Federation," which is to be accepted into the Photographic Alliance. The Society has already become affiliated to the London Film Institute Society, thus affording it advantages of British Film Institute membership.

At the January monthly meeting, B. Salt, of Gaumont-British Instructional, lectured on cartoon films, showing three he had made himself. At the technical meeting on February 10th, E. J. Chard, of Cinecraft Supplies, Ltd., gave a lecture on titling, accompanied by an exhibition of a large selection of titling apparatus and films illustrating the various points covered.

The making of short films on industries is of particular appeal to the Society, and some of the members have recently completed a film for the Mortlock Sterilised Milk Supply Co. Ltd., of Manor Park.

At a discussion held last month it was suggested that future productions should include a number of educational shorts. The proposal was met with approval, and a sub-committee was appointed to undertake the work of organisation. The Hon. Secretary is F. J. Philpott, 7 Wellington Road, East Ham, E.6.

Film Society News

SUDBURY FILM SOCIETY: Two films by members were entered in the Scottish Film Festival this year. One of these—*The Presentation of the Colours by King Edward VIII*—received an award, and the Hon. Anthony Asquith, who adjudicated, remarked that this film was better than anything produced by the newsreel companies. It was filmed in colour by J. E. Davies.

A programme of films and gramophone records was recently given to members at the H.M.V. Co. In another meeting of the Society a demonstration of television was successfully carried out.

In addition to the projection evenings, some time is spent in production, and a new colour film, *Zero Hour*, is nearing completion.

The Hon. Secretary of this Society is Bertram P. Tyrer, 9 Cranleigh Gardens, Kenton, Middlesex.

EDINBURGH FILM GUILD: The eighth performance on March 7th was arranged to illustrate the ways in which music can be used on the screen. The principal film shown was *The Unfinished Symphony*, the story of Schubert. Further illustrations of the cinematic use of music were presented in *Metropolitan Nocturne* and in *The Band Concert*, and also in *In der Nacht*, *William Tell Overture* and *Kaleidoscope*. After the show a discussion on Music and the Film was held in the Caledonian Hotel. Mr. Guy Warrack was among the guests.

STIRLINGSHIRE FILM SOCIETY, which has now about 200 members, has had a successful first season.

There have been five Sunday performances in the Regent Cinema, Bannockburn, and among the feature films have been *Maskerade*, *So Ended a Great Love*, *L'Atalante*, *La Crise est Finie*, and *M*. Two programmes, one of G.B. Instructionals and one of G.P.O. films, were also shown.

On December 8th, 1936, Mr. John Grierson addressed the Society on "Scottish Films and the Empire Exhibition"; and, on February 8th, Mr. Harry Watt spoke on "Documentary Films."

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY: The chief feature of the meeting held on March 15th at the David Lewis Theatre was *Der Schimmelreiter* ("The Rider on the White Horse"), directed by Curt Oetel and Hans Deppe, and adapted from one of the most impressive of the many Friesland legends. Among the other films shown were *Lobsters*, a cleverly conceived study by John Mathias and L. Moholy-Nagy; *And So to Work*, an original comedy of early morning English life by Dr. Massingham; *Musical Abstract*, a Fischinger cartoon, and a three-minute French film *Pacific Problems*.

CAITHNESS FILM SOCIETY: Active in both the spheres of production and projection, this Society has taken over a disused laundry as studio and club room. A "house warming" party, included a showing of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. Production on 16 mm. has begun. Once the studio is fully equipped, work will commence on another film depicting life in a Caithness croft. The past work of the Society has been mainly devoted to documentaries and records of local events. Hon. Secretary: J. W. P. Flint, Esq., Sumburgh, Hill Avenue, Wick.

The Work—and the Worries—of the London Film Society

(A reply to Dr. P. A. Gorer)

A LETTER by P. A. Gorer to the Editor of *W.F.N.* published in our last issue raises a number of interesting points concerning the functions and administration of the Film Society.

(1) *Mr. Gorer asks whether it is the object of the Society to amuse or to uplift.* As an organisation whose performances are exempt from Entertainments Tax on account of their educational value the Society is naturally concerned to maintain its tradition of providing an opportunity not otherwise available for the study of valuable technical and æsthetic experiments in the film. The medium selected is in itself a negation of the theory which regards education as incompatible with amusement.

(2) *What is the basis on which films are selected? Does rarity play any part in the choice? Does a bad Japanese film stand a better chance than a good American film on the ground that Japanese films are of sufficient interest to be shown apart from merit?*—Rarity does play an important part in the Society's choice of programmes, since it is one of its main principles to show films not otherwise accessible in this country. The fact that Japanese films may be bad from our point of view does not make it less interesting to know what the Japanese themselves regard as good and how they employ the medium of the screen. A "bad" Japanese film that cannot otherwise be seen does therefore stand a better chance to be included than a "good" American film that can be seen in commercial cinemas.

Selection

(3) *Who selects the Society's programmes?* The Society makes it a point that, wherever possible, films submitted should be viewed by at least three council members. This obviously implies that the films can be seen in this country. The possibility of importing a copy for the purpose of viewing it in bond depends entirely on the financial resources of the Society, or, in other words, on the size of its membership. The cost of doing so varies from £15 to £20 for each feature film. Even so this course is invariably adopted, when a favourable or even a doubtful report has been received from a council member who has seen a particular film abroad.

But it is obvious that with its present resources the Society must be guided by the opinion of the council member sent abroad for the special purpose of viewing films, if his verdict is unequivocally negative. This is undoubtedly unfortunate, but the remedy lies with an increase in the membership which will make it financially possible to send more than one member abroad for the purpose of film selection.

(4) *Why not more revivals of good American films? Is the reason æsthetic or technical?*—The reasons are purely technical: (*a*) In almost every case all copies of such films have been scrapped by the renters after the general release; (*b*) to reprint a copy at the Society's expense is far more costly than to show an English or Continental film the copy of which is supplied by the owners; (*c*) even where the Society desires to obtain and pay for a reprint the American renters often refuse its request on the grounds that they might themselves consider a reissue at some later date (it should be remembered that the American renters, not being interested in Film Society releases, are little inclined to meet it in matters outside their usual business routine).

There remains, however, the wider problem whether in view of the changing standards of American and Continental production there is still a sufficient supply of interesting technical or æsthetic experimental films not available for commercial or other reasons to the general public. That there was such a supply in the past, that moreover the activities of the Society have been of vital importance not merely in the growth of the repertory cinema movement, but also in raising the general quality of commercial films, cannot for one moment be doubted. The list of feature films shown by the Society since its formation is sufficiently impressive as evidence for the services rendered by the Film Society. Many of those films were never, or only under exceptional conditions, publicly exhibited. Even if the feature films shown during the present season are examined from this point of view, only one will be found that might justly be regarded as a stopgap. *The New Gulliver*, *Hortobagy*, *La Tendre Ennemie*, *We from Kronstadt*, all fully attained the Film Society standard of technical or æsthetic interest.

But what are the prospects that this state of affairs will continue in the future? In the first place it should be remembered that even if the supply from many Continental sources may continue to be disappointing, there is every reason to expect a considerable increase in the number of Russian films that will shortly be available. An impressive list of films scheduled for release during the Twentieth Anniversary of the October Revolution this year will illustrate the new achievements both of the old and of the rising generation of Russian directors. With the difficulties of language and content it is unlikely that many of these films will obtain a public showing in this country.

Pioneer Work

As long as there is creative originality left in the cinema, there will always of necessity be experimental pioneer work, unsuitable for the commercial screen. This will remain true, however much the quality of the commercial film will increase (and no one can tell whether that increase will not at some time or other be checked by social events beyond the control of the film world, as was the case in Germany). And it is just in this sphere that the most important function of the Film Society is to be found. In an art in which the creative worker must have exceptional resources of vital energy to maintain his integrity and to assert his claims in a whirlpool of conflicting commercial and political interests, an audience interested in his creative problems as such and willing to act as a sounding-board for his experiments is of the greatest value to him. Whether the Film Society will continue to be able worthily to fulfil this function depends entirely on the loyalty of its members and the vigour of its Council.

M. A. T.

Film Society News (*contd.*)

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY: The programme given at the Rivoli Cinema on Sunday, March 14th, was headed by *Le Loup Garou*, a study of the fear and grim terror that grips the victim of a chase when the game is up. It is directed by Friedrich Feher, who was also responsible for *Robber Symphony*. Also shown were George Pal's *Ether Symphony* and Rotha's *Chapter and Verse*. The last show of the season will be on April 11th, and will include *West Front* 1918 (Pabst); *Moscow*, a French puppet film; and some German Gasparcolor abstracts. Hon. Secretary: T. Cavanagh, Esq., 86 Halton Street, Salford, 5.

IPSWICH FILM SOCIETY. Following illustrated lectures by Edgar Anstey and Basil Wright, the Ipswich Film Society has shown *The Song of Ceylon*, *West Front* 1918, *Hey Rup! Wings Over Everest*, *Turksib* and *Bonne Chance!* Activities during April include an illustrated lecture by Stuart Legg on "Film Technique" and the presentation of *Contact* and *En Natt*. The society is also planning to hold additional performances for children.

THE METEOR FILM PRODUCING SOCIETY of Glasgow was awarded first prize in Class C (Any Type of Film, Open to Amateurs Resident in Scotland) of the Scottish Amateur Film Festival. Their film, *Fourth in Hand*, tied for the award with James H. Lorimer of Dundee's documentary *Creels*, and the propaganda film, *Hell, UnLtd.* of the Glasgow School of Art Group.

Fourth in Hand had its première at a party held in Society's Studios on an evening during the week preceding the Festival. About 70 guests were present, including Harry Gordon and other prominent stage, radio and newspaper personalities.

Three leading members of the Society were invited to broadcast on the Young Scots programme of the Scottish Regional: the subject of their talk was "How a Film is Produced." The three members were Ian S. Ross, Jack Robertson, Jr., Secretary and President respectively of the Amateur Cinematography Panel of the Scottish Film Council, and James C. Hastie, producer and founder of Glasgow's famous amateur repertory, The Curtain Theatre.

Fourth in Hand may be hired from programme secretary, Ian S. Ross, 80 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1, for 6 shillings silent or 10 shillings with records.

> One of these days business will have to reconcile itself to the fact that it is selling to the middle-aged, and that a considerable number of the middle-aged may be put off buying a lipstick, or a roadster (or a film) if it is constantly advertised as peculiarly suitable to the bright lads and even brighter hoydens of about 17. The age limit in the advertisements will have to rise. We are all willing to cut off five years or maybe ten, but what we want to see in the advertisements are men and women not too overwhelmingly different from ourselves.
>
> —Gilbert Seldes, *Esquire*

B.B.C. Events

Thursday, April 1st, 7.45 p.m.: *Chocolate Soldier*. Musical comedy. Production: McConnel. NATIONAL. ★ 8 p.m. Feature programme. *April Fool's Day*. Production: Felton. REGIONAL.

Friday, April 2nd, 8.0 p.m.: Opera. *Fanal*, Act 2. Relayed from Sweden. REGIONAL.

Saturday, April 3rd, 7.30 p.m.: *In Town Tonight*. Production: Hanson. NATIONAL.

★Sunday, April 4th, 9.5 p.m.: *The Cherry Orchard*. By Tchekov. Production: Gielgud. NATIONAL.

Monday, April 5th, 8.20 p.m.: Harry Hopeful. *Trough of Bowland*. Production: Bridson. NORTH REGIONAL. 9.35 p.m.: *I Made You Possible*. By Ivor Brown. Production: Burnham. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, April 6th, 8.0 p.m.: *The Girl Behind the Counter*. Musical comedy. Production: Campbell. NATIONAL.

Wednesday, April 7th, 8.15 p.m.: Concert from Queen's Hall. Bach, Beethoven, Brahms. Conductor: Boult. NATIONAL. 9.30 p.m.: Amateur Boxing. Commentary from Albert Hall. REGIONAL.

★Thursday, April 8th, 7.30 p.m.: *Die Meistersinger*, Act 2. Relayed from Berlin State Opera House. REGIONAL. 9.0 p.m.: Feature programme. *Warren Hastings*. Production: Gilliam. REGIONAL.

Saturday, April 10th, 7.30 p.m.: *A.B.C.* Edition One. Devised by Alec Heath. Production: Hanson. NATIONAL.

Sunday, April 11th, 6.30 p.m.: *The Table Under the Tree*. Production: Hanson. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, April 13th, 7.30 p.m.: *His Father's Sword*. By Anthony Ellis. Production: Creswell. REGIONAL.

Wednesday, April 14th, 7.45 p.m.: B.B.C. Symphony Concert. Beethoven, Mozart, Sibelius, Wagner. Conductor: Boult. NATIONAL.

Friday, April 16th, 7.15 p.m.: *Wireless Puppets*. Production: Wylie. NATIONAL. ★8.15 p.m.: Feature programme. *Ratcliffe Highway*. Production: Morrow. NATIONAL.

Saturday, April 17th, 7.55 p.m.: Opera. *Blue Beard's Castle*. By Bartok. Relayed from Budapest. REGIONAL.

Sunday, April 18th, 7.15 p.m.: *Three Women*. By Katherine Mansfield. Production: Allen. NATIONAL.

Monday, April 19th, 8.0 p.m.: *Othello*, Acts 1 and 2. From Covent Garden. REGIONAL. 9.45 p.m.: Acts 3 and 4. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, April 20th, 8.0 p.m.: *The Second Round*. By Sapper. Production: Sieveking. NATIONAL.

★Friday, April 23rd, 2.15 p.m.: Shakespeare Birthday Luncheon. Speeches from Stratford-on-Avon. NATIONAL. 7.30 p.m.: Feature programme. *King Arthur*. Production: Gielgud.

Sunday, April 25th, 6.15 p.m.: *Trojan Women*. By Gilbert Murray. Production: Burnham. NATIONAL.

Monday, April 26th, 9.35 p.m.: *Almonds and Raisins*. Yiddish variety. NATIONAL. 8.0 p.m.: *Ariane et Barbe Bleu*. Acts 1 and 2. From Covent Garden. REGIONAL. 10.35 p.m.: Act 3. NATIONAL.

Wednesday, April 28th, 5.30 p.m.: Feature programme. *Cricket*. NATIONAL. 8.0 p.m.: *East Lynne*. Production: Gilliam. NATIONAL

Radio . . . Schools . . .
Open Casement on the World

THERE IS A strange feeling that radio has slipped into the schools on the skirts of the mandarins, very like a little boy into a football match. But just as that urchin becomes the most vocal of enthusiasts on the other side of the turnstiles so may radio become first voice in the re-orientation of education. To that end it must choose its own text and matter, of a stuff more vital and enduring than the teaching of Magna Charta, and the hibernation of hedgehogs.

Several points in the current programme of Broadcast to Schools 1936–37 flatter the hope that such a choice will be made.

We have long lost our notion of history as a pageant of cloak and sword. Rational opinion turns on our old Arthurian Wallace and Bruce and rends them. It substitutes the real drama of man's struggle for his rights and needs. Radio has joined us in cutting to the core of the historical apple, to the seeds of human progress through the life of a people. In the two main geographical courses, we have a sensibly modern treatment of the problems and genius of humanity in its larger physical environment.

At its worst, education removes the child's natural illiteracy and puts him in a fair way to earning a livelihood. At its best, our education opens the windows of the classroom, and lets the youth look out upon the life which awaits him, lets him see his fellow-man working and playing amidst his fellows, leading or following, getting and spending, designing and fashioning his own ends. Many a teacher will tell you, with natural pride in his craft, that working over the same material he can teach better than any wireless set invented. It is true given normal subject matter. But if we are to extend the awareness of the child beyond books, then we need all the resources of science to bring the world into the school. A beginning has been made with Talks to the Sixth Year. Known authorities set out to these senior students something of the historical background, the problems, the movements of to-day.

Curriculum we must have for a revised education. But if radio is guided by the poets and prophets, it must appear increasingly in the schools not as the teacher's aid to instruction as tested by examinations, but as the growing citizen's ally, and an open casement upon the real world.

W. E.

RADIO AND TELEVISION

By George Audit

THE FUNNY MAN is supreme in radio. Nine out of every ten listeners pay their money for a joke. Speech and melody are the elements of radio. The comedian personifies the former, and the cinema organist the latter. The B.B.C. has only gathered three million pounds a year because of its variety artists and its melody makers.

In literally millions of drab lives the Saturday evening Variety show is a bright point. Meals are put forward and glasses of beer refused to make way for it. In a canvass I made of East End streets a few months ago the huge majority of the people I met had a single complaint about the wireless: Saturday evening Variety at 9.30 was too late. It meant they dare not go out to the local pub beforehand for fear of missing the show and by the time it was over the pubs were shut.

The B.B.C. has responded to that demand only grudgingly, as a prude condescends to a kiss. It seems afraid of comedy. The Variety Department under Eric Maschwitz is of comparatively recent origin. The standard of comedy is the Victorian music hall, the Viennese heilige and the balalaika orchestra. Its regular Saturday show is called "Music Hall," complete with a fake audience clapping to numbers and ventriloquists, child impersonators, Scots comedians and the oldtime music hall stars from Charlie Coborn to Harry Tate. That would be tolerable if what the artists said had any relation to real life. But one tires of the mother-in-law joke, the sentimental song and the eternal malaproping at the expense of the Cockney.

We may be said to inherit two sources of humour. Buffoonery and Bacchus with its slapstick and doubtful jokes. And satire from Aristophanes. The B.B.C. abhors the one and suspects the other. It is probably wise to exclude the bawdy but it must find a substitute. The experience of the film would suggest satire. Charlie Chaplin and the Marx Brothers would surely lose all point unless their pranks were set in *real* surroundings. They make fun of the serious world. As in Greek drama the comic mask is merely the reverse of the tragic. In history the jester is always close to the politician.

The B.B.C. denies all that. Hungry for talent it sends Eric Maschwitz touring the capitals of Europe looking for artists, while Gillie Potter and Flotsam and Jetsam are "suspended" at home. Potter is a satirist. His Hogsnorton visits and his "Truth about the Press" turns were excellent humour. But he once offended by coming on before the General Election and making funny remarks about the political campaigns. He told me recently that he had not broadcast for three years because he was not asked and because he believes "broadcasting is a medium of entertainment of its own, and is not a glorified music hall, and no imitation music hall audience should come between the comedian and the wireless public." The B.B.C. gave him ten minutes alone with the microphone on March 19th. Shortly before he broadcast he told me, "It is my job as a licensed clown to know everybody's views and to comment on them without seeming to give offence." He reads all the English newspapers but he reads "French newspapers to find out what is happening in England." He is particularly annoyed with the Press and propaganda lords who make a practice of suppressing the truth. "How can they expect me to make them laugh when they are always hiding reality?" I quote Gillie Potter's remarks because they represent an attitude which the B.B.C. seems loth to admit into its comedy.

* * * *

One hears varied claims of the number of television receivers in use. One firm claims to be selling a thousand sets a month. A despondent B.B.C. official suggested forty a month. I should think it is safe to say that 200 new television sets are being brought into use every week. That should allow an audience of nearly 10,000 by the end of the year.

Television still suffers serious technical restrictions. The image is too small. The screen is only about 8 inches by 10 inches with fading at the corners. To be seen at a reasonable distance the illumination in the screen must be intensified with a consequent loss of proper contrast. Deep patchy shadows and bright points of light give a soot-and-whitewash effect. There must be projection on to a larger screen before we can expect any real enjoyment from television programmes.

Another limitation I have noticed is that you cannot get a "close-up" in the film sense. You can get alterations of focus but only up to half of the figure. When Elizabeth Cowell is announcing you have to look at practically all of her. Attempts at montage by using two cameras are sometimes effective.

The television camera is still tied to the Alexandra Palace by a steel cable several hundred yards long. When the B.B.C. manages to get its television cameras into the streets of London we may expect something interesting.

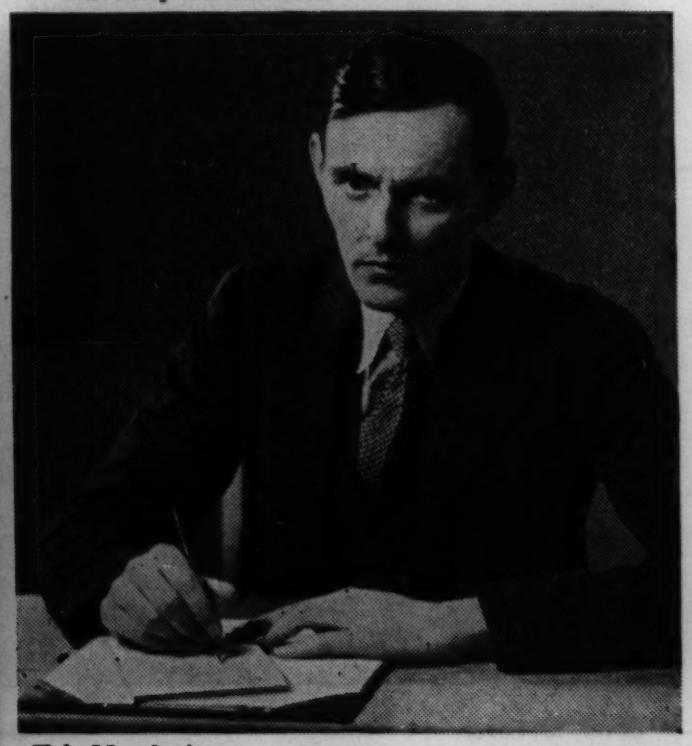
* * * *

One of the items in the B.B.C.'s £100,000 budget for the Coronation was announced to be the installation of three new transmitters for the Empire service and an increase in the aerial-power of the Empire station at Daventry to 40 kilowatts. It now transpires that there may be another reason for this large and sudden expansion of imperial broadcasting.

Germany has a high-powered short-wave transmitting station, the Zeesen station in Berlin. This station, controlled by the Goebbels Ministry of Propaganda, is considered to be an integral part of the Nazi colonial-restoration campaign. It transmits programmes, consisting largely of "news," in English as well as German. Like Daventry, it sends its programmes to different geographical "zones" at different times of the day. And in each of the Zeesen zones lie British possessions or mandated territories.

In a world agreement drawn up by the International Broadcasting Union there is a clause to the effect that no State may broadcast propaganda programmes to another country in that country's language. The B.B.C. is reported to have given warning that Britain will not consider herself bound to this clause if Germany violates it.

Meanwhile, day and night shifts are at work carrying out the alterations and expansions of the Daventry transmitters.



Eric Maschwitz

FILM GUIDE

Shorts

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (Puppets in Gasparcolor).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Slatinay and George Pal

AXMINSTER: Guildhall	April 12, 3 days
BOWNESS: Royalty	April 29, 3 days
CLAYTON: Carlton	April 26, 6 days
DOUGLAS, I.O.M.: Regal	April 5, 3 days
GLASGOW: Boulevard, Knightswood	April 8, 3 days
Dalmarnock Picture House, Bridgeton	April 15, 3 days
Crown, Gorbals	April 8, 3 days
Pavilion, Clydebank	April 12, 3 days
KEIGHLEY: Regent	April 19, 6 days
KNARESBOROUGH: Cinema	April 29, 3 days
LLANDUDNO: Grand	April 8, 3 days
LONDON: News Theatre, Great Windmill Street	April 22, 4 days
OLDHAM: King's	April 5, 9 days
PENDLETON: Ambassador's	April 19, 6 days
SWINTON: Ellesmere	April 19, 6 days

And So to Work (A comedy of early morning rising—see page 29).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Richard Massingham

BRIDLINGTON: Lounge	April 26, 6 days
DAVENTRY: Regal	April 12, 3 days
DUNDEE: Royal	April 5, 3 days
ILFRACOMBE: Scala	April 1, 3 days
LINCOLN: Exchange	April 19, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Casino	April 15, 3 days
LONDON: King's, Wimbledon	April 19, 6 days
World News	April 8, 4 days
TORQUAY: Electric	April 19, 6 days
TOWCESTER: Cinema	April 15, 3 days

Beside the Seaside (Documentary of South Coast resorts).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

LIVERPOOL: Smithdown Picture Playhouse	April 12, 3 days
LONDON: King's, Wimbledon	April 5, 6 days
SHEFFIELD: Chantrey Picture House	April 26, 3 days
Palace, Wincobank	April 29, 3 days

Birthplace of America (British origins of American pioneers).
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: A. Moncrieff Davidson

BOLTON: Carlton	April 22, 3 days
CHESTER: Tatler	April 12, 6 days
COLLINWOOD: Queen's	April 29, 3 days
LEEDS: Lounge, Headingley	April 1, 3 days
PEMBERTON: Carlton	April 1, 3 days
STOCKPORT: King's	April 14, 2 days
Vernon	April 5, 3 days
STOURBRIDGE: Scala	April 26, 3 days

Cable Ship (Documentary of the G.P.O. Cable Ships at work in the Channel).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Stuart Legg

LAINDON: Picture House	April 15, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Bedford, Walton	April 26, 3 days

Coal Face (Poetic treatment of coal-mining).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
SOUND PRODUCTION: Alberto Cavalcanti

CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH: Regent	April 12, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Picturedrome	April 29, 3 days
PRESTON: Regal	April 23, 2 days
WICK: Pavilion	April 19, 3 days
WINDERMERE: Empire	April 5, 3 days

Cover to Cover (Documentary of book production).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Alexander Shaw

BARNSTAPLE: Gaumont Palace	April 15, 5 days
BRIDLINGTON: Winter Gardens	April 15, 3 days
CLAYTON: Carlton	April 26, 6 days
HYDE: Alexandra	April 26, 3 days
Scala	April 5, 6 days
LLANDUDNO: Grand	April 15, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Ambassador's, Pendleton	April 19, 6 days
OXFORD: Scala	April 26, 6 days
SHEFFIELD: Palace	April 26, 6 days
SWINTON: Allesmere	April 12, 6 days

Dragon of Wales (A travelogue attempting to tackle economic conditions).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: W. B. Pollard

HULL: Criterion	April 29, 6 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: News Theatre	April 19, 6 days

Earthquake (Dramatic account of its cause and effect).
DISTRIBUTION: Pioneer Films
DIRECTION: Milton N. Moore

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Road	April 26, 7 days

Enough to Eat ("The Nutrition Film").
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: The Gas Light and Coke Co.
DIRECTION: Edgar Anstey

BIRMINGHAM: Picture House, Harborne	April 8, 3 days
GLOSSOP: Empire	April 26, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Corona	April 5, 6 days
Empress	April 1, 3 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: News Theatre	April 12, 6 days

Fire Fighters (Documentary of the London Fire Brigade).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Peter Colin

ANDOVER: Odeon	April 8, 3 days
HULL: Langham	April 12, 3 days
Playhouse	April 29, 3 days
LONDON: Cinema, Hoxton	April 5, 7 days
NEWARK: Palace	April 1, 3 days
OXFORD: Scala	April 26, 3 days

Fishing on the Banks of Skye.
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit

BUXTON: Opera House	April 19, 6 days
CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH: Regent	April 12, 3 days
DARLINGTON: Empire	April 8, 3 days
STOCKPORT: Plaza	April 12, 6 days

How to Vote (Amusing record of a political speech in the Benchley manner).
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: Robert Benchley

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Road	April 19, 7 days

Key to Scotland (Documentary of Edinburgh).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

BIRKENHEAD: Plaza	April 12, 3 days
Rialto, Bebington	April 26, 6 days
DUMFRIES: Regal	April 26, 3 days
EDINBURGH: Monseigneur	April 19, 3 days
GREENOCK: Regal	April 22, 3 days
HULL: Criterion	April 12, 6 days
IRVINE: Palace	April 29, 3 days
LONDON: Strand News, Agar Street	April 1, 4 days
ST. ANDREWS: Picture House	April 8, 3 days

Low Water (First day's work of a dock-side unemployed).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Turner-Robertson Films

MANCHESTER: Tatler, Oxford Street	April 12, 6 days

"Cover to Cover"

"Enough to Eat"

Shorts (*contd.*)

Men Against the Sea (Documentary of North Sea trawling).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Vernon Sewell

BROMLEY: Palais de Luxe	April 5, 7 days
HULL: Playhouse	April 22, 3 days
LONDON: Lion, Rotherhithe	April 12, 6 days
Varieties, Hoxton	April 12, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Whitehall, Openshaw	April 15, 3 days
MIDDLEWICH: Alhambra	April 8, 3 days
READING: Savoy	April 5, 3 days
SANDBACH: Palace	April 12, 3 days
SOUTHAMPTON: Cinenews	April 4, 4 days
TIBSHELF: Palace	April 12, 3 days
WINSFORD: Magnet	April 5, 3 days

Feature Films for April Release

Theodora Goes Wild (Columbia)
DIRECTOR: Richard Boleslawski
STARRING: Irene Dunne
Melvyn Douglas
Thomas Mitchell

Sensation (Wardour)
DIRECTOR: Brian Desmond Hurst
STARRING: John Lodge
Diana Churchill
Francis Lister
Athene Seyler
Margaret Vyner
Jerry Verno

Winterset (Radio)
DIRECTOR: Alfred Santell
STARRING: Burgess Meredith
Margo
Eduardo Ciannelli

Daniel Boone (Radio)
DIRECTOR: David Howard
STARRING: George O'Brien
Heather Angel

Dishonour Bright (G.F.D.)
DIRECTOR: Tom Walls
STARRING: Tom Walls
Eugene Pallette
Betty Stockfeld
Diana Churchill
Cecil Parker

General Died at Dawn (Paramount)
DIRECTOR: Lewis Milestone
STARRING: Gary Cooper
Madeleine Carroll
Akim Tamiroff
Dudley Digges
Porter Hall

Land Without Music (G.F.D.)
DIRECTOR: Walter Forde
STARRING: Richard Tauber
Diana Napier
Jimmy Durante
June Clyde

Libelled Lady (M.G.M.)
DIRECTOR: Jack Conway
STARRING: Jean Harlow
William Powell
Myrna Loy
Spencer Tracy
Walter Connolly

Love on the Run (M.G.M.)
DIRECTOR: W. S. Van Dyke
STARRING: Joan Crawford
Clark Gable
Franchot Tone
Reginald Owen

This'll Make You Whistle (G.F.D.)
DIRECTOR: Herbert Wilcox
STARRING: Jack Buchanan
Elsie Randolph
Jean Gillie

Milestones (The varying types to be seen in England).
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: A. Moncrieff Davidson

BIRMINGHAM: Capitol, Ward End	April 5, 3 days
CHESTER: Tatler	April 5, 6 days
CLITHEROE: Grand	April 26, 2 days
DUNDEE: Royal	April 19, 3 days
LEEDS: Shaftesbury	April 8, 3 days
MORECAMBE: Whitehall	April 22, 3 days
PONTEFRACT: Premier	April 29, 3 days
SADDLEWORTH: Palace	April 19, 3 days
STOURBRIDGE: King's Hall	April 12, 6 days
SUNDERLAND: Millfield	April 26, 3 days
WIGAN: Prince's	April 12, 6 days
WORKSOP: Gaiety	April 5, 3 days

Night Mail (Documentary of the northward trip of the postal special).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Basil Wright and Harry Watt

BO'NESS: Royalty	April 29, 3 days
BRIGHOUSE: Albert Hall	April 2, 2 days
COATBRIDGE: Regal	April 22, 3 days
COCKERMOUTH: Grand	April 1, 3 days
KNARESBOROUGH: Cinema	April 19, 3 days

Scratch Meal (Marcel Boulestin at work).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
DIRECTION: Arthur Elton

LEEDS: Queens	April 1, 3 days
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Road	April 19, 7 days

Secret Hiding Places (Priest holes to be found in English country houses).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Granville Squiers

BOURNEMOUTH: Regent	April 12, 6 days
BRIGHTON: Academy	April 18, 4 days
CIRENCESTER: Picture House	April 8, 3 days
GLASGOW: B.B. Cinema	April 15, 3 days
GRIMSBY: Savoy	April 19, 6 days

"Secrets of Life" Series (Imaginative descriptions of natural processes).
DISTRIBUTION: G.B.D.
DIRECTION: Mary Field
TECHNICAL SUPERVISION: Percy Smith
Rock Pools
MANCHESTER: Tatler, Oxford Street April 5, 6 days

Vanishing Sails. (Story of the Medway Sailing Barge).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: Steuart Films
DIRECTION: Ronald Steuart

MANCHESTER: Crescent Theatre, Hulme	April 29, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Regal, Kiveton Park	April 1, 3 days
TIBSHELF, DERBY: Palace	April 26, 3 days

Foreign Films

Der Ammerkoenig ("King of the Nurses"—banned German comedy).
DIRECTION: Hans Steinhoff.
LONDON: Studio One, Oxford Street
Following *La Kermesse Héroïque*

Burgtheater (Austrian).
SCENARIO and DIRECTION: Willi Forst
STARRING: Werner Krauss
Olga Tschechowa
LONDON: Academy, Oxford Street,
April 16, indefinitely

The Deserter (Pudovkin's first sound film—Russian).
DIRECTION: V. I. Pudovkin
STARRING: Boris Livanov
LONDON: Forum, Villiers Street April 1–3

Ernte ("Harvest")—Austrian.
DIRECTOR: Geza von Bolvary
STARRING: Paula Wessely
LONDON: Academy, Oxford Street April 1–15

Golem (Czechoslovakian—French dialogue).
DIRECTION: Julian Duvivier
STARRING: Harry Baur
LONDON: Forum, Villiers Street April 4, indefinitely

Pépé Le Moko (French).
DIRECTION: Julian Duvivier
STARRING: Jean Gabin
LONDON: Curzon Following *The Sequel to Second Bureau*

"The General Died at Dawn"—Released this month

rfu
first · film
in production

Basil Wright
A.R.F.P

John Taylor
A.R.F.P

SCRIPT AND SCENARIO ADVISOR

A. Cavalcanti

realist film unit

EVELYN HOUSE, 62 OXFORD STREET, W.1

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